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THE

Corpus MS

(CORPUS CHRISTI COLL., OXFORD)

OF

Chaucer's Canterbury Tales.

EDITED BY

FREDERICK J. FURNIVALL.

PART V.

Squire Sun. Canon's Yeoman. Doctor. Pardoner. Shipman.
Prioress Thopas Melibeus Monk. Nun's Priest Manciple.

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The Chaucer Society.

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To do honour to Chaucer, and to let the lovers and students of him see how far the best unprinted Manuscripts of his works differ from the printed texts, this Society is founded. There are many questions of metre, pronunciation, orthography, and etymology yet to be settled, for which more prints of Manuscripts are wanted, and it is hardly too much to say that every line of Chaucer contains points that need reconsideration. The founder's proposal is to begin with *The Canterbury Tales*, and give of them (in parallel columns in Royal 8vo) six of the best unprinted Manuscripts known. Inasmuch also as the parallel arrangement will necessitate the alteration of the places of certain tales in some of the MSS, a print of each MS will be issued separately, and will follow the order of its original. The first six MSS to be printed are the Ellesmere (by leave of the Earl of Ellesmere); the Hengwrt (by leave of W. W. E. Wynne, Esq.); the Cambridge Univ. Libr., MS Gg. 4. 27; the Corpus, Oxford; the Petworth (by leave of Lord Leconfield); and the Lansdowne 851 (Brit. Mus.).

Of Chaucer's Minor Poems,—the MSS of which are generally later than the best MSS of the Canterbury Tales,—all, or nearly all, the MSS will be printed, so as to secure all the existing evidence for the true text.

To secure the fidelity and uniform treatment of the texts, Mr F. J. Furnivall will read all with their MSS.

The Society's publications are issued in two Series, of which the first contains the different texts of Chaucer's works; and the Second, such originals of, and essays on these as can be procured, with other illustrative treatises, and Supplementary Tales.

The Society's issue for **1868**, in the **First Series**, is,

I. The Prologue and Knight's Tale, of the Canterbury Tales, in 6 parallel Texts (from the 6 MSS named below), together with Tables, showing the Groups of the Tales, and their varying order in 80 MSS of the Tales, and in 5 old printed editions, and also Specimens from several MSS of the "Movable Prologues" of the Canterbury Tales,—The Shipman's Prologue, and Franklin's Prologue,—when moved from their right places, and of the Substitutes for them. (The Six-Text, Part I.)

II. The Prologue and Knight's Tale from the Ellesmere MS.
III. " " " " " " Hengwrt " 154
IV. " " " " " " Cambridge " Gg. 4. 27
V. " " " " " " Corpus " Oxford
VI. " " " " " " Petworth "
VII. " " " " " " Lansdowne " 851

(separate issues of the Texts forming Part I of the Six-Text edition.)

The issue for **1869**, in the **First Series**, is,

VIII. The Miller's, Reeve's, and Cook's Tales: Ellesmere MS.
IX. " " " " " " Hengwrt " } with an
X. " " " " " " Cambridge " } Appendix of
XI. " " " " " " Corpus " } "Gamelyn"
XII. " " " " " " Petworth " } from six MSS.
XIII. " " " " " " Lansdowne "

(separate issues of the Texts forming the Six-Text, Part II, No. XIV.)

The issue for **1870**, in the **First Series**, is,

XIV. The Miller's, Reeve's, and Cook's Tales, with an Appendix of the Spurious Tale of Gamelyn, in 6 parallel Texts. (Six-Text, Part II.)

The issue for **1871**, in the **First Series**, is,

XV. The Man of Law's, Shipman's, and Prioress's Tales, with Chaucer's own Tale of Sir Thopas, in 6 parallel Texts from the MSS above named, and 16 coloured drawings of Tellers of Tales, after the originals in the Ellesmere MS.
XVI. The Man of Law's Tale, from the Ellesmere MS.
XVII. " " " " " " " Cambridge MS.
XVIII. " " " " " " " Corpus MS.
XIX. The Shipman's, Prioress's, and Man of Law's Tales, from the Petworth MS.
XX. The Man of Law's Tale, from the Lansdowne MS.
(each with woodcuts of fourteen drawings of Tellers of Tales in the Ellesmere MS.)
XXI. A Parallel-Text edition of Chaucer's Minor Poems, Part I:—"The Isonomie of Blaunche the Duchesse," from Tarrant's ed. of 1532, the Fairfax MS 16, and Tanner MS 346; "the Cowplaynt to Pite," "the Parliament of Foules," and "the Cowplaynt of Mars," made from six MSS.
XXII. Supplementary Parallel-Texts of Chaucer's Minor Poems, Part I, containing "The Parlement of Foules," from three MSS.

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GROUP G. FRAGMENT VIII.

§ 1. THE SECOND NUN'S TALE.

CORPUS MS.

[*THE PROEM.*] [*No breaks in the Corpus MS between the stanzas.*]

[And next [Arch. Seld. B. 14, *leaf* 215]
bigynneth the seconde nonne hir tale. &c.

(1)

The ministre *and* norice / vn-to vices 1
which̄ that men clepen / in englissh̄ / Idelnesse
that porter of the gate is / of delices
to eschewen / *and* bi hir contrarie to oppresse 4
that is to seyne / bi leoful besynesse
wel ough̄te we to don / al oure entente
lest that the fende / thorugh̄ Idelnesse vs hente. 7

(2)

ffor he that with̄ his thousand cordes sligh̄e 8
contenuelly vs waiteth̄ / to bi-clappe
whan he may man/ in Idelnesse aspie
he can so lightly cacche him / in his trappe 11
til that a man be hente / right bi the lappe
he nys not ware / the fende hath̄ him in honde
wel ough̄te vs werche / *and* Idelnesse with̄-stonde. 14

(3)

And though̄ men dradden neu*er*e / for to die 15
yit se men wel bi reson / doutelese
that Idelnesse is hoten / slogardie
of whiche cometh̄ neu*er*e / noon encrese 18
and sithen that slouth̄ hir holdith̄ in a lese
only for to slepe / *and* ete *and* drynke
and to devouron / al that other swynke [*leaf* 215, *back*] 21

(4)

¶ And for to putten vs / from suche Idelnesse [MS Arch. Seld. B. 14]
that cause is / of so grete confusion
I haue here don / my feithful besynesse
after the legende / in translacion
right after thi glorious liff / *and* passion
thow with thi garland / wroughte of rose *and* lylye
the mene I / maide / *and* martir / seynt Cecelye.

(5)

¶ And thow that floure art / of virgynes alle
of whom that Bernard / list so wel to write
to the at my bigynnyng / first I calle
thow comforte of vs wrecches / do me endite
thi maidens deth / that was thorugh hir merite
the eternal liff / *and* of the fende victorie
as men mow after rede / in hir storie.

(6)

¶ Thow maiden *and* moder/doughter of thi sone] [Arch. Seld. B. 14 *extr. ends*]
Thou welle of mercy synful soules cure [leaf 171]
In whom þat god for bounte chees to wone
Thou humble and heih ouer eu*er*y creatur*e*
Thou nobledest so ferre oure nature
That no desdeyn þe make*re* hadde of kynde
his sone in blood and fleissch to cloþe and wynde

(7)

¶ Wiþinne þe cloystre blisful of þine sydes
Took mannes schap þe eterne loue and pees
That of þe trine compas lord and gyde is
Whom erþe and see and heuene out of reles
Ay herien and þou v*ir*gine wemmeles
Bare of þy body and dwelledest/ mayde pure
The creatour of eu*er*y creature

(8)

¶ Assembled is in þi magnificence
Wiþ mercy goodnesse and with such pite
þatˢ þou artˢ þe sonne ofˢ excellence
Nouȝtˢ only helpestˢ hem þatˢ prayen þe
Butˢ ofte tyme ofˢ þin benignite
fful frely er þatˢ men þin helpe beseche
þou gostˢ byforn and artˢ here lyfes leche

(9)

¶ Now help þou meke and blisful faire mayde
Me flemyd wrecche in þis desertˢ ofˢ galle
Thenkˢ on þe wo*m*man Canane þatˢ sayde
Thatˢ whelpes eten some ofˢ þe cro*m*mes all*e*
þatˢ from here lordes table ben y-fall*e*
And þoughꝫ þat I þe vnworþy sone ofˢ eue
be synful ȝitˢ accepte my byleeue

(10)

And for þatˢ feiþ is deed wiþoute werkes
So for to worchen ȝifˢ me witte and space
þatˢ I be quytˢ from place þatˢ mostˢ derkˢ is
O þou þatˢ artˢ so fair and so ful ofˢ grace
Be myn aduocate in so heih a place
Ther as wiþouten ende is longe Osanna
Thou cristes moder and doughter ofˢ Anna

(11)

And ofˢ þin ligꝫtˢ my soule kepe in prisoñ
Thatˢ troubled is by þe contagioun
[of my body / & also bi the wighte [MS Arch. Seld. B. 14]
of erthely lust / & fals affeccion] [leaf 171, back]
O heuene o refute O saluacioñ
Ofˢ hem þatˢ ben in sorwe and in destresse /
Now help for vnto my werkˢ I wol me dresse /

(12)

¶ 3etᵗ pray I 3ou þatᵗ reden þatᵗ I write
ffor3eueþ me for I do no diligence
þis ilke story subtil to endite
ffor boþe haue I þe wordes and þe sentence /
Ofᵗ hem þatᵗ atte seyntes reuerence /
The story wrootᵗ & solewen h*ir* legende
And pray I 3ou þatᵗ 3e woln my werkᵗ amende

(13) [*THE TALE.*]

ffirstᵗ wolde I 3ou þe name ofᵗ seintᵗ Cecile
Expoune as men may in here stories se
Itᵗ is to say on englissħ heuene lylye
ffor pure chastnesse ofᵗ virginite /
Oþer for sche witnesse hadde ofᵗ honeste
Ofᵗ greue ofᵗ conscience and ofᵗ good fame
The soote sauour lilye was hire name

(14)

Ouþer Cecile is to say þe way to blynde
ffor sche ensample was by good techynge
Or elles. Cecile is as I writen fynde
Is ioyned by a maner conioygnynge
Ofᵗ heuen and lya and heiher in figuringe
The heuen is setᵗ for þoughtᵗ ofᵗ holynesse
And lya for hire lastyngᵗ busynesse /

(15)

Cecile may eekᵗ be sayd in þis manere
Wantynge ofᵗ blyndnesse for hire grete ligħt
Ofᵗ sapiens and for hir þewes clere
Oþer elles þis maydenes name brigħt/
Ofᵗ heuen and leos comeþ for which by rigħtᵗ
men mighte þe heuene ofᵗ poeple hire calle
Ensample ofᵗ goode and wise werkes alle

(16)

ffor leos poeple in englissch is to say
And right' as men may in þis heuene se
þe sonne and moone and þe sterres eu*er*y way
Right' so gostly in þis mayden fre
Seyen þe feiþ of' magnificence
And ekyng' of' helþe and of' sapience [leaf 172]
And sondry werkes bright' of' excellence /

(17)

And right' as þis philosophres wryte
That' heuen is swyft' round and brynnyng'
Right' so was faire Cecile þe whyte
fful swift' and besy euer in good werkyng'
And round & hool in good *per*seueryng
And brenne euere in charite lighte /
Now haue I declared 3ou what' sche highte

(18)

This mayden bright' Cecile as hire lyf' saiþ
Was comen of' Romayns and of' noble kynde
And so forþ fostred vp in þe faiþ
Of' crist' and bar his gospel in hire mynde
Sche neuer cessede as I writen fynde
Of' hire prayere and god to loue and drede
Besechinge him to kepe hire maydenhede /

(19)

And what' þis mayden schulde vnto a man
y-wedded be þat' was ful 3ong' of' age
Which þat y-cleped was valerian
And þe day was comen of' hire mariage
Sche fil deuoute and humble /in hire corage
Vnder hire robe of' gold þat' sat' ful faire
And next' hire fleissh sche clad hire in an haire

(20)

And whiles þe Orgles maden melodye
To god allone þus in herte sangˢ sche
O lord my soule and eekˢ my body gye
Vnwemmed lestˢ þatˢ I confoundid be
And for his loue þatˢ deyde vpon a tre
Euery secounde or þridde day sche faste
Ay byddyngˢ in hire orisons ful faste

(21)

The nightˢ com and to bedde sche moste gon
Wiþ hire housbonde as often is þe manere
And pryuely sche sayde to him anon
O swete and wel biloued spouse dere
Ther is a counseil and ȝe wolde it here /
Which þatˢ rightˢ fayn I wol vnto ȝou sayn
So þatˢ ȝe me assurc itˢ noughtˢ to bewrayn [lf 172, bk]

(22)

Valerian gan faste / vnto hire swere
Thatˢ for no cas ne þingˢ þatˢ mighte be
he scholde for no þingˢ neuer bywreyen hire
And þanne atˢ erstˢ þus to him sayde sche
I haue an aungel which þatˢ loueþ me
Thatˢ wiþ gretˢ loue whe*þer* so I wake or slepe
Is redy ay my body for to kepe

(23)

And ifˢ þatˢ he may felen out ofˢ drede
[that ye me touche / or loue in vilonye [MS Arch. Seld. B. 14]
he right anoon wol sle yow / with the dede
and in youre youthe / thus shul ye die
and if that ye / in clene loue me guye]
he wolde ȝou loue as me for ȝour clennesse
And schewe ȝou ofˢ his ioye and his brightnesse

(24)

valerian corrected as god wolde
Answerde aȝein if' I schal truste to þe /
let' me þat' aungel see and him biholde
And if' þat it a verray aungel be
Thanne wol I don as þou hast' preyed me
And if' þou loue anoþer man for soþe /
Right' wiþ þis swerd I wol sle ȝou boþe

(25)

Cecily answerde anon in þis wise
If' þat' ȝou luste þat' aungel schul ȝe se
So þat' ȝe trowe on crist' and ȝou baptise
Goþ forþ to via apia *quod* sche
þat' from þis toun ne stant' by myles þre /
And to þe pouere folkes þat' þere dwelle /
Sey hem right' þus as þat/ I schal ȝou telle /

(26)

Telle hem þat I Cecile ȝou to hem sent
To schewen ȝou þe goode vrban þe olde
ffor secre needes and fro good entent'
And whan þat' ȝe seint vrban han byholde /
Telle him þe wordes whiche þat' I ȝou tolde /
And whan þat' he haþ purged ȝou from synne
þanne schal ȝe see þat' aungel er ȝe twynne

(27)

Valerian is to þat' place y-gon
And right' as him was taught' by his lernyng'
he fond þis holy Vrban þer anon
Among' þese seyntes buriels lotying' .i. latitans
And he anon wiþoute tarying' [leaf 173]
Dide his message and whan he hadde tolde
Vrban for ioye gan his handes vpholde

(28)

The teeres from his eyhen leet' he falle /
Almighty god O Ihesu crist *quod* he
Sowere of' chaste counseille and herde of' vs alle
þe fruyt' of' þilke seed of' chastite /
þat' þou hast' sowe in Cecile tak' to þe
Lo y-like a busy bee wiþoute gyle
The serueþ ay þin oughne þralle Cecile

(29)

¶ ffor þilke spouse þat' sche tok' but' now /
fful like a fiers leoñ sche sendeþ heere /
As meke as eny lambe was to ȝow /
And wiþ þat' word anon þer gan apeere /
An olde man clad wiþ white cloþes cleere
And hadde a book' wiþ *lettres* of' gold in honde
And gan biforn Valerian to stonde

(30)

Valerian as deed fel doun for drede
Whan he him saugh and him vp hente þo
And on his book' right' þus he gan to rede /
O lord o feiþ o god wiþoute mo[1] [1] Et lamentat' [is the next line]
Of' cristendom and fader of' al also
Abouen alle and ouer alle euery where
This wordes alle with golde writen were /

(31)

Whan þis was rad þan sayde þis olde man
leeuest' þou þis þing' or no sey ȝe or nay
I leeue alle þis þing' þan þis [quod tho Valerian [MS Arch. Seld. B. 14]
for sother thing than this /] I dar wel say
Vnder þe heuene no wigħt/ ne þenke may
þo vanysscheð þe olde man he nyste where
And pope vrban him cristned rigħt' þere

(32)

Valerian goþ hom and seintꝫ Cecile
Wiþinne his chambre an aungel stande
þis aungel haddeꝫ Rose andꝫ lylie
Corounes tuo þe which he bar in hande
And ferstꝫ to Cecile as I vnderstande /
he ʒafꝫ þatꝫ oon and after gan he take [leaf 173, back]
þatꝫ oþer to Valerian hire make

(33)

With body clene and wiþ vnwe*m*myd þouʒt /
kepeþ ay wel þis corounes q*uo*d he
ffrom paradys to ʒou haue I hem brouʒtꝫ
Ne neuer more schulle þey roten be
¶ Ne leese here swete sauour trusteþ me
Ne neuere wigħtꝫ schal seen hem wiþ his yhe
Butꝫ he be chaste and hate vilonye /

(34)

And þou valerian for þou so sone
Assentedestꝫ to good counseil also
Sey whatꝫ þe luste and þou schaltꝫ haue þy bone /
I haue a broþ*er* quod valerian þo
þatꝫ in þis world I loue no man so
I pray ʒou þatꝫ my broþ*er* may han g*rac*e
To knowe þe trouþe as I do in þis [place]

(35)

The aungel answerde god likeþ ʒoure requeste
And boþe with þe palme ofꝫ martirdome
ʒe schulle come vnto þe blisful feste
And wiþ þatꝫ word Tiburce his broþ*er* come
And whan þatꝫ he þe sauour vndernome
Which þatꝫ þe roses and þe lylies caste /
Wiþinne his herte he gan to wondre faste /

(36)

And seyde in þis tyme I wondre of^{t} þe ȝeere
Whenne þis swote sauour comeþ so /
And Rosis and lilyes þat^{t} I smelle heere
ffor þoug$\bar{h}$ I hadde hem in myn hondes tuo
The sauour mig$\bar{h}$t in me no deppere go
þe swete smelle þat^{t} in myn herte I fynde
haþ chaunged me al in anoþ*er* kinde

(37)

valerian sayde tuo corounes han we
Snow whit^{t} and Rose Reed þat^{t} schyneþ cleere
Which þat^{t} þin yhe haþ no mig$\bar{h}$t^{t} to see
And as þou smellest^{t} hem þorugh my preyere
So schalt^{t} þou seen hem leeue broþer deere
If^{t} it/ so be þat^{t} þou wolt^{t} wiþouten slouþe
Bileeue arig$\bar{h}$t^{t} and knowe verray trouþe [leaf 174]

(38)

Tiburce answerde saist^{t} þou þis to me
In soþnesse or in drem herkne ȝe þis
In dremes q*uo*d valerian han we be
vnto þis tyme broþer myn y-wys
But^{t} now at^{t} erste oure trouþe dwellyng^{t} is
how wost^{t} þou q*uo*d Tiburce and in what^{t} wyse /
Quod valerian þat^{t} I schal þe deuyse /

(39)

þe aungel of^{t} god haþ me þe trouþe y-taug$\bar{h}$t
Which thou schalt^{t} seen if^{t} þat^{t} þou wolt^{t} reneye
þe ydolis and be clene and elles naug$\bar{h}$t^{t}
And of^{t} þe miracles of^{t} þise corounes tweye
Seint^{t} ambrose in his p*re*face lust to seye
Solempnely þis noble doctor deere
Comendiþ it/ and saiþ in þis maneere

(40)

The palme of martirdom for to receyue
Seint Cecile fulfilde of goddes ȝifte
þe worlde and eek hire chambre gan sche weyue
Witnesse Tiburce and Cecyles schrifte/
To which god of his bounte wolde schifte
Corounes two of floures wel smellynge /
And made þe aungel hem þo corounes brynge

(41)

¶ þe mayde haþ brought þise men to blisse aboue
The world haþ wist what it is worþ certeyn
Deuocioñ of chastite to loue
þo schewed him Cecile open and pleyn
That alle ydolis nys but þing in veyn
ffor þey ben dombe and þer-to þey ben deue
And charged him his ydolis for to leue

(42)

¶ Who þat þis troweþ not a beste he is /
Quod þo Tiburce if þat I schal not lye
Sche gan þanne kisse his breste and þat herde þis
And was ful glad he couþe trouþe aspye
This day take þe for myn allye
Seyde þis blisful mayde fair and deere
ffor after þat sche sayde as ȝe may heere

(43)

Lo right so þe loue of crist q*uod* sche [leaf 174, back]
made me þin broþeres wyf right in þat wyse
Anoon for myn allye here take I þe
Siþenes þat þou wolt[1] þine ydolis despise [1 *ink spilt over the page*]
Go with þy broþer now and þe baptise /
And make þe clene so þat þou mayst beholde
þe aungels face of which þy broþer tolde

(44)

Tiburce answerde and seyde broþer deere
fferst telle me whider I schal and to what man
To whom q*uod* he com forþ with right good cheere
I wol þe lede vnto þe pope vrban
To Vrban broþer myn Valerian
Quoþ þo Tiburce wilt þou me þider lede
Me þinkeþ þat it were a wonder dede

(45)

¶ Remenest þou nouȝt vrban q*uod* he þo
That is so ofte dampned to be deed
And woneþ in halkes to & fro /
And dar nouȝt ones putte forþ his heed
Men schulle him brenne in a fir so reed
If þat he were founde if þat men might him spye
And we also þat bere him companye

(46)

And whiles we seken þilke diuinyte
þat is y-hyd in heuene priuely
Algate y-brent in þis world schul we be
To whom Cecile answerde bodyly
Men mighte drede wel and skilfully
þis lyf to lese myn owne deere broþer
yif þis were lyuynge oonly and non oþer

(47)

But þer is bettere lyf in oþer place
þat neuer schal be lost ne drede þe nought
Which goddes sone vs tolde þorugh his grace
[that the fadris sone / hath al thing wrought [MS Arch. Seld. B. 14]
and al that wrought is / with a skilful thought
the goost that from the fader / gan *pro*cede
hath souled hem / withouten eny drede.

(48)

¶ By worde & bi myracle / godis sone [MS Arch. Seld. B. 14]
whan he was in this world / declared here
that ther was other liff / there men may wone
to whom answerde Tyburce / O sust*er* dere 333
ne seidist thow right now / in this manere
ther nas but O god / lord in sothfastnesse
and now of thre / how maist thow bere witnesse. 336

(49)

¶ That shal I telle q*uo*d she or that I go] [MS Arch. Seld. B. 14 *extract ends*]
Right' as a man haþ sapiences þre /
Memorie Ingenie and Intellecte also
So in o beynge of' diuynite / 340
Thre p*er*sones right' wel þer may be
Tho gan sche him besyliche p*re*che /
Of' cristes come. and of' his peynes teche [leaf 175] 343

(50)

And many poyntes of' his passiõ 344
how goddes sone in þis world was wiþholde
To do mankynde pleyn remissiõ
That' was y-bounde in synne and cares colde 347
Al þis þing' sche vnto Tiburce tolde
And after þis Tiburce in good entent
To pope vrban wiþ Valerian he went 350

(51)

which þanked god and wiþ glad herte & light' 351
he cristned him and made him in þat place
Parfyt' in his lyuynge goddes knight'
And after þis Tiburce gat such grace 354
þat' eu*er*y day he seyh in tyme and space
þe aungel of' god and euery maner bone
þat' he god asked it' was sped ful sone 357

(52)

¶ It' were ful hard by ordre for to seyn
how many wondres ihesu for him wrouȝt'
But' atte laste to telle schort' and pleyn
þe sergeaunt' of' þe toun of' Rome hem sought'
And hem byforn Almache þe prouost' brought'
Which hem opposede and knew al here entent'
And to þe ymage of' Iubiter he hem sent /

(53)

And sayde who so wol not' Sacrifise
Swap of' his heed þis is my sentence heere /
Anon þise martires þat' I ȝou deuyse /
On Maximius þat' was an officere /
Of' þe Prefectis and of' Corniculere
hem hente and when he forþ þe seintes ledde
himself' he weep for pite þat' he hadde

(54)

¶ Whan maximine hadde herde þe seintes lore /
he gat' hem of' þe tormentoures leue /
And hadde hem in his hous wiþoute more
And wiþ here prechyng' er þat' it/ were eue
þey gonne from þe tormentours to reue /
And from Maximius and from his folk' ilkon
þe false feiþ to trowe in god allon

(55)

Cecile cam whan it' was woxen night' [leaf 175, back]
Wiþ prestes þat' hem cristned alle in feere
And aftirward. whan day was waxen light
Cecile hem sayde wiþ a sobre chere
Now cristes owne knightes leeue and deere
Casteþ alle a wey þe werkes of' derknesse /
And armeþ ȝou in armure of' lightnesse

(56)

ȝe han forsoþe ydon grete batailıe 386
ȝoure is doon ȝoure feiþ han ȝe conserued
Goþ to þe coroune of lyf þat may nouȝt faille
þe rightful Iuge which þat ȝe han [served [MS Arch. Seld. B. 14] 389
shal yeue hit yow / as ye han it] deserued
And whan þis þing was sayd as I deuyse
men ladde hem forth to don þe sacrifise / 392

(57)

But whan þey were vnto þe place y-brouȝt / 393
To telle schortly þe conclusioñ
þey nolde encense no sacrifice right nouȝt
But on here knees þey setten hem adoun 396
Wiþ humble herte and sad deuocioñ
And losten boþe here hedes in þe place
here soules wenten to þe kyng of grace 399

(58)

This maximius þat say þis þing betyde / 400
Wiþ pitous tales tolde it/ anon right
þat he here soules saugh to heuen glyde
With aungels ful of clernes and of light 403
And wiþ his word conuerted many a wight
ffor which Almachus dede him so to bete
Wiþ whippe of leed til he his lyf gan lete / 406

(59)

Cecile him took and buried him anon 407
By Tyburce and Valerian softely
Wiþinne hire heryinge place vnder þe ston
And after þis Almachius hastily 410
Bad his mynistres fecchen openly
Cecile so sche mighte in his *pre*sence
Do sacrifice and Iubit*er* encense 413

(60)

But þey conuertid þorugh hire wise lore
Wepten sore and ȝauen credence /
Vnto hire word and cryden more and more [leaf 176]
Crist' goddes sone wiþouten difference
his verray god þis is alle oure sentence
þat' haþ so good a seruañt' him to serue
þus wiþ oo vois we trowe þeyȝ we sterue

(61)

Almachius þat herde al þis speking'
Bad fecche Cecile þat' he might' hir se
And alþer first' lo þis was his askyng'
What' maner womman artow þo quod he /
I am a gentil womman born quod sche /
I aske quod he þouȝ it þe greue
Of' þin religioñ and of' þin byleeue

(62)

Whi þanne bygan ȝoure questioñ folily
Quod sche þat' woldest' tuo answers conclude /
In oo demaunde ȝe askide lewedly
Almachie answerde to þat' similitude /
[of whens cometh̄ thin answere / so rude] [MS Arch. Seld. B. 14]
Of' whennes quod sche. whan þat' sche was refreyned
Of' conscience and of' good feiþ vnfeyned

(63)

Almachius sayde takest' þou non heede /
Of' þin answere and sche him answerde þus
ȝoure might' quod sche litel is to drede /
ffor euery mortel mannes power nys
But' y-like a bladdre ful of' wynd y-wys /
ffor wiþ a neldis poynt/ when þat' is blowe
may al þe bost' of' it' be leyd ful lowe /

(64)

fful wrongfully bigan þou q*uod* he
And ȝitꝫ in wrongꝫ is þin p*er*seuerance
Wostꝫ þou nouȝtꝫ how oure mighty p*ri*nces fre
Ben þus coma*u*ndid and maken ordinannce
That eu*er*y cristne wigħtꝫ schal han pena*n*nce
Butꝫ ifꝫ þatꝫ he his cristendom wiþ-seye
And gon al quytꝫ ifꝫ he wol itꝫ receyue

(65)

¶ ȝoure princes erren as ȝoure noblen doth̄
Quod þo Cecile / and a wood sentence
ȝe make vs gulty and it nys nouȝt soþ̄
ffor ȝe þatꝫ knowen wel oure Innocence
ffor as moche as we don a reu*er*ence [leaf 176, back]
To cristꝫ. and for we bere a cristene name
ȝe putte on vs a cryme and eekꝫ a blame

(66)

Butꝫ we þatꝫ knowen þilke name so
ffor v*er*tuous we may itꝫ notꝫ say
Almachie answerde chese on ofꝫ þise tuo
Do sacrifice or cristendom reneyne
þatꝫ þou mow now skapen by þatꝫ wey
Atꝫ which þe holy blisful mayde
gan for to laughe and to þe Iuge sche sayde

(67)

O Iuge confuse in þy nycete
Woltꝫ þou þatꝫ I reneye Innocence /
To make me a wicked wightꝫ quod sche
loo he dissimileþ here in audience /
he stareþ and woodeþ in his aduertence
To whom almachius O Vnseely wrecche /
Ne wostꝫ þou noughtꝫ how fer my mighttꝫ may strecche

(68)

haþ nought' oure mighty prince to me y-ȝouen
ȝe boþe power and auctorite /
To make folk' to deyen and to lyuen
Why spekest' þou so proudly þenne to me
I ne speke it' nouȝt' but' stedefastly q*uod* sche /
Nought' proudly for I say as for my syde
I hate dedly þilke vice of' pryde

(69)

¶ And if' þou drede nouȝt' a soþ to heere
þan wol I schewen al openly by right'
That' þou hast/ maad a ful gret' lesyng' heere
þou sayst' þy princes han ȝeue þe might'
Boþe to sleen and eek' for to quike a wight'
þou þat' ne mayst' but' oonly lyf' here byreue
þan nast' þ*er*to neyþer power ne leeue

(70)

But' þou mayst' see þin princes han þe maked
Ministre of' deþ for if' þou speke of' mo /
þou lyest' for þy power is ful naked
Do wey þy boldenesse/ seyde almachius þo
And sacrifice to oure goddes or two [leaf 177]
I ne recche nouȝt' what' wrang' þat' þou me profre
ffor I can suffre it' as a philosophre

(71)

But' þilke wronges may I nought' endure
þat' þou spekest' of' oure goddes here q*uo*d he /
Cecile answerde O nyce creature
þou saydest' no word syns þou speeke to me
þat' I ne knewe þ*er*with þy nycete
And þat' þou were in eu*er*y maner wyse /
A lewed officer and a vein Iustise

(72)

Þer lackeþ noþing to þin vtter yhen
Þat þou nart blynd for þing þat we seen alle
That is a ston yt men wel may aspyen
That ilke ston a god þou wilt it calle
I rede þe let þin hond vpon it falle
And taste it wel and stoon þou schalt it fynde /
Syns þat þou sixt it nought wiþ þin yȝen blynde /

(73)

It is a schame þat þe poeple schalh
So skorne þe and lawhe at þy folye /
ffor comunely wo*m*men woot it wel ouer al
Þat mighty god is in his heuenes hihe
And þese ymages wel þanne mayst þou aspye
To þe ne to hemself may þey not p*ro*fyte
ffor in here effecte þey be not worþ a myte

(74)

Þis and such oþ*er* wordes seyde sche /
and he wax wroþ and bad þey schulde hire lede /
home to hire hous and in hire hous q*uod* he
Brenne hire in a fire wiþ fla*m*mes reede
And as he bad right so was don in dede
And in a bathe þey gan hire faste scheten
And night and day gret fuyr vnder þey beetyn

(75)

Al þe longe night and eek þe day also /
ffor alle þe fuyr and eek þe baþes hete /
Sche satte al colde and felt of it/ no wo
Ne made hire a drop nouȝt for to swete /
But in þat baþe hire lyf sche moste lete /
ffor he Almachie wiþ ful wikked entent [leaf 177, back]
To slen hure in þe bath his sonde sent

(76)

Þre strokes in Þe necke he smot' hire Þo
The tormento*ur* but' for no maner chaunce
he might' not' smyten al hire necke a tuo
And for Þer was Þat' tyme an ordynaunce
That no man scholde do man such penañce
Þe ferÞe strook' to smyten softe or sore
Þis tormento*ur* ne durste nomore

(77)

But' half' ded wiÞ hire necke koruen Þere /
he laft' hir lye and in his wey he went'
Þe cristne folke whiche abouten hire were /
WiÞ scheetes home ful faire hire hent'
Þre dayes lyued sche in Þis torment
And neuer cessed hem Þe feiÞ to teche
Þat' sche hadde fostred hem sche gan to p*re*che

(78)

And hem sche ȝaff' hire moebles and hire Þing'
And to Þe pope vrban bitok' hem Þo /
And sayde Þus I askede Þis of' heuen king'
To haue respyt' Þre dayes and no mo /
To recomande to ȝou er Þat' I go
Þise soules lo and Þat' I mighte do wirche
here of' myn hous p*er*petuelliche a chirche

(79)

Seint vrban wiÞ his deaknes priuely
The body fette and buried it by nighte
Among' his oÞere seintes honestely
hire hous Þe chirche of' seint' Cecile highte
Seynt' vrban halwed it' as he wel mighte
In Þe which in to Þis day in noble wyse /
Men don to cryst' and to his seintz s*er*uise

¶ Here endeÞ Seint' Ceciles Tale /

GROUP G. § 2. 2ND NUN-CAN.-YEOMAN LINK. Corpus MS.

[*on leaf* 177, *back*] ¶ Hic' incipit' fabula Canonici

Whan ended was þe lyf' of' seint' Cecile
Er we fully hadde ryden fyue myle
At' Boghtoñ vnder þe blee. vs gan atake /
A man þat' cloþed was in cloþes blake
And vnder þat' he hadde a whit' surplys
his hakeney þat' was al pomel grys [leaf 178]
So swette þat' it' wonder was to see
It' semed he hadde priked myles þre
þe hors eek' þat' his ȝoman rood vpon
So swette þat' vnneþe mighte he gon
Aboute þe peytrel stood þe foom ful hiȝe
he was of' fome al flekked as a pye
A male twyfold on his croper lay
It' semed þat' he caryed lytel aray
Al light' for somer rood þis worþy man
And in myn herte wondren I bygan
What' þat' he was til þat' I vnderstood
how þat' his cloke was sewed to his hood
ffor which whan I longe hadde avised me /
I demed him som chanoñ for to be /
his hat' hyng' at' his bak' doun by a las /
ffor he hadde ryde more þan trot' or pas /
he hadde ay priked lyk' as he were wood
A clote leef' he hadde vnder his hood
ffor swot' and for to kepe his heed from hete
But' it/ was ioye for to seen him swete /
his forhed dropped as a stillatorie
Were ful of' plaunteyne and of' peritorie

And whan þat' he cam he bigan to crye
God saue q*uod* he þis Ioly companye
ffaste haue I priked q*uod* he for 3oure sake
By cause þat' I wolde 3ou ou*er*take /
To ryden in þis merye companye
His 3oman eek' was ful of' curtesye
And sires now in þe morwe tyde /
Out' of' 3oure ostellerye I say3 3ou ryde
And warned heer my lord and my souerayn
Which þat' to ryde wiþ 3ou is ful fayn
ffor his disport' he loueþ daliaunce
ffrend for þy warnyng' god 3iue þe good chaunce
Sayde oure oost' certes it' wolde seeme /
Thy lord were wys and so I may wel deme / [leaf 178, back]
he is ful iocunde also dar I lay
Kan he ought' telle a merye tale or tway
Wiþ which he glade may þis companye
Who sire . my lord ! 3e 3e wiþoute lye
he can of merþe and eek' of' Iolite
Nought' but' ynough also sire trusteþ to me
And 3e him knewe als wel as do I
3e wolde wondre how wel and þriftyly
he couþe werke and þat' in sondry wyse
he haþ take on him many sondry aprise
Which were ful hard for eny þat' is heere /
To bringe aboute but' þey of' him it' lere /
As homely as he ryt' amonges 3ou
If' 3e him knewe it' wolde be 3oure prow /
3e nolde not' forgon his aqueintance
ffor mochil good I dar leye in balañce
Al þat' I haue my possessioñ
he is a man of' heigh discrecioñ
I warne 3ou wel he is a passynge man
Wel quoþ oure host' I pray þe telle me þan
Is he a Clerk' or noon telle what' he is
Nay he is gretter þan a clerk' y-wys

GROUP G. § 2. 2ND NUN-CAN.-YEOMAN LINK. **Corpus MS.**

Seyde ȝe ȝoman and in wordes fewe
Ost' and of his craft' somwhat' I wol ȝou schewe
I say my lord can such a sotilte
But' alle his crafte ȝe may not' wite at' me
And somwhat' helpe I ȝit' to his worchinge
That' al þis ground which þat' we ben on rydynge
Til þat' we come to Caunturbury toun
he couþe al clene turne it/ vp se doun
And paue it' al of' siluer and of' gold
And whan þis ȝoman hadde þus y-told
vnto oure hoost' // he seyde benedicite
þis þing' is wonder merueylous to me
Siþens þat' þi lord is of' so heigh prudence /
By cause of' which men scholde him reuerence / [leaf 179]
That' of' his worschipe rekkeþ he so lyte
his ouer sloppe / nys nouȝt' worþ a myte /
As in effecte to him so mote I go
It' is al baudy and to-tore also
Whi is þi lord so sluttissche I þe prey
And is of' power better cloþes to bey
If' þat' his dede acorde wiþ þy speche
Telle me þat and þat' I þe byseche /
Why q*uod* þis ȝeman wherto aske ȝe me /
God help me so for he schal neuer y-the
But' I wol not' avowe þat' I say
And þ*er*fore kepe it secre I ȝou p*ray*
he is to wys in faiþ as I bileeue
And þat' is ouer doon it' nyl not' preue
And right' as clerkes sein it' is a vice /
Wherfore in þat' I holde him lewed and nyce
ffor whan a ma[n] haþ ouer gret' a witt
fful often it happeþ to mysvsen it'
So doþ my lord and þat me greueþ sore
God it' amende I can seye now no more
Ther-of' no fors goode ȝoman q*uod* our*e* hoost'
Siþens of' þe connyng' of þy lord þou woost

Telle how he doþ I pray þe hertely
Siþens þat' he is so crafty and so sly
Wher dwellen ȝe if' to telle be
In Subarbes of' a toun q*uo*d he
lurkyng' in hernes and in lanes blynde
Where þise Robbers and þeeues be kynde
holden here preuy ferful resydence
As þay þat' dur nat' schewe here p*re*sence
So fare we if' I schal saye þe soþe
ȝit' q*uod* oure hoste lat' me talke toþe
Why art' þou discoloured on þy face
Peter q*uod* he god ȝiue hit' harde grace
I am so vsed in þe fyre to blowe
That' it haþ chaunged my colour as I trowe [leaf 179, back]
I nam nat' wont' in myrour to prye
But' swynke sore and lerne to multiplye
We bloundren euer and pouren in þe fyr
And for al þat' we faillen of' oure desir
ffor euer we lacken oure conclusioñ
To moche folk' we ben but' Illusioñ
And borwe gold be it' a pound or tuo
Or ten or twelue or manye so*m*mes mo
And make hem wenen atte leste weye
þat' of' a pound we couþe make tweye
ȝit' is it' fals and ay we han good hope
It' for to don and after it' we grope
But' þat' science is so fer vs biforn
We mowe not' al þoughh we hadde it' sworn
It' ouertake it'[1] slyt' awey so faste [1 *a second* it *scratcht out*]
It' wole us make beggeres atte laste
Whil þis ȝoman was þus in þis talking'
þis chanoñ droughh him ner and herde alle þing'
Which þat' þis ȝoman spak' for suspecioñ
Of' mennes speche euere hadde þis Chanoñ
ffor Catoñ seithh he þat' gulty is
Demeþ alle þing' be spoke of' him ywys

GROUP G. § 2. 2ND NUN-CAN.-YEOMAN LINK. Corpus MS.

By cause of' þat' he gan so neigh to drawe /
his 3oman. þat' he herde alle his sawe /
And þus he sayde vnto his 3oman þo
holde now þy pees and speke wordes no mo /
ffor if' þou dost' þou schalt' it dere abye
Thou sclaundrest' me here in þis compaignye
And eek' discouerest' þat' þou scholdest' hyde
3ee q*uod* oure hoost' telle on what' sò betyde
Of' alle þis þretyng' recche I nat' a myte
I faiþ quod he no more do I but' a lite
And whan þis Chanoñ say it' wolde nat' be
But' his 3oman wolde telle his priuyte
he fledde away for verray sorwe and schame /
A q*uod* þe 3oman here schal aryse a game [leaf 180]
Al þat' I can anon right/ wol I telle
Siþens he is gon þe foule feend him quelle /
ffor neuer her after wol I wiþ him mete
ffor peny ne for pound I 3ou biheete /
he þat' me broughte ferst' vnto þat game /
Er þat' he deye sorwe haue he and schame
ffor it' is ernest' to me by my fayþ
That' feele I wel what so eny man saiþ /
And 3it' for al my smert' and al my greef'
ffor al my sorwe labour and mescheef'
I couþe neuer leue it in nó wyse
Now wolde god my witt/ mighte suffise
To tellen al þat' longeþ to þat art'
But' naþeles 3it' wol I telle a part'
Syþens þat' my lord is gon I wol not' spare
Such þing' as I knowe I wol declare /

[*No break in the MS.*]

[*THE PREAMBLE.*]

With þis chanoñ dwelled haue I seuen ȝeer
And of' his science am I neuer þe neer
Al þat' I hadde I haue y-lost' þerby
And god wot' so haue many mo þan I
þer I was wont' to be right' freissch and gay
Of' cloþing' and of' good array
Now may I were an hose vpon myn heed
And wher my colour was boþe freissh and reed
Now is it' wan and of' a ledene hewe
Who so it vseth sore schal he rewe
And of my swynk' ȝit' blered is myn yȝe
lo which auauntage it is to multiplye
That' slydynge science haþ me maad so bare
That' I haue no good where þat' euer I fare
And ȝit' I am endetted so þer by
Of' gold þat/ I haue borwed trewely
þat' whil I lyue I schal it' quite neuere /
lat' euery man be war by me for euere
What maner man þat casteþ him þerto
If' he continue I holde his þrifte y-do [leaf 180, back]
So help me god þer-by schal he not' wynne
But' empte his purs and make his wittes þinne
And whan he þorugh his madnesse and folye
haþ lost' his owne good þorugh Iepardye
þanne he exciteþ oþer men þerto
To lese here good as himself' haþ do
ffor vnto schrewes Ioye it is and ese
To haue here felawes in peyne and disese

GROUP G. § 3. CAN.-YEOMAN'S PREAMBLE. **Corpus MS.**

Thus was I ones lerned of a clerk
Of þat no charge I wol speke of oure werk
Whan we ben þere as we schulle ex*er*cise
Oure eluysshe craft; we semen wonder wise
Oure termes ben so clergeal and so queynte
I blowe þe fuyr. til þat myn herte feynte
What scholde I telle eche p*ro*porcioñ
Of þinges whiche þat we worchen vppon
As on fyue or sixe vnces may wel be
Of siluer or of som oþer quantite
And besye me to telle ȝou þe names
Of Opyment brent bones yren squames
That in to poudre grounden ben ful smal
And in an erþen pot how þat put is al
And salt y-put in and also paupere
Bifore þise poudres þat I speke of here
And wel y-couered wiþ a laumpe of glas
And of muche oþer þing what þat þer was
And of þe pot and glas englutyng
That of þe aier mighte passe no þing
And of þe esy fyr and smert also
Which þat was mad and of þe care and wo
þat we hadde in oure matiers sublymynge
And amalgamynge and Calcenynge
Of quyk syluer y-cleped mercurie crude
ffor all*e* oure sleigħtes we can nouȝt conclude
Oure orpymed and sublimed mercurie
Oure grounde litarge eek on þe porphirie [leaf 181]
Of ech of þise of vnces a certayn
Nouȝt helpeþ vs oure labour is in vain
Ne eek oure spirites ascencio*un*
Ne eek oure matieres þat lyn al fixe a do*un*
Mowen in oure werkynge no þing vs auayle
ffor lost is all*e* oure labour and trauaile
And al þe cost on twenty deuele wey
Is lost also which we vpon it ley

CORPUS 403 (6-T. 553)

Þer is also many anoþer þing/
Þat' is to oure crafte aperteynyng'
Þough I by ordre hem here ne reherse can
By cause þat' I am a lewed man
3it' wol I telle hem as þey come to mynde
Though I ne kan nat' sette hem in here kynde
As boole armonyak' verdegres Boras
And sondry vesseles made of' erþe and glas
Oure vrinales and oure descensories
Violes creseletes and sublimatories
Concurbites and Alembykes eeke
And oþer swiche deere ynough a leeke
Nat' needeþ it/ to rehersen hem alle
Wateres Rubysynge and boles galle
Arsynek' Sal armonyak' and Brymston
And herbes couþe I telle eek' many oon
As Egrymoyne Valerian and lunarie
And oþer suche if' þat' me luste tarie
Oure laumpes brennyng' boþe night' and day
To bringe aboute oure craft' if' þat' we may
Oure fornays eke of' Calcynacioñ
And of' watres albyficacioñ
vnslekked lym chalk' and glaire of' an ey
Poudres dyuers aisshes dong' pisse and cley
Seryd pokettes Sal petre and vitriole
And diuerse fyres made of' woode and cole
Salt' tartre Alcaly and Salt' preparat
And combust' matieres and coagulat [leaf 151, back]
Cley maad wiþ horses or mannes heer and oyle
Of' tartre alym glas berme wort' and argoyle
Rysalgar and oþer matieres enbykynge
And eek' of' oure matieres encorporynge
And eek' of' Siluer Citrynacioñ
Oure sementynge and fermentacioñ
Oure Ingotes testes and many mo
I wol 3ou telle as was me taught' also /

þe foure spirites and þe bodyes seuene /
By ordre ofte as I herde my lord neuene
The fyfte spirit quykꝭ siluer called is
þe seconde orpiment. þe þridde y-wys
Sal armoniakꝭ and þe ferþe bremston
The bodyes seuene eekꝭ lo hem heere anon
Sol gold is and luna siluer we threpe /
Mars yren mercurie quyk syluer we clepe
Saturn*us* leed and Iubiter is tyn
And venus Copur by my fader kyn
This cursede craftꝭ who so wol ex*er*cise
he schal no good han þatꝭ may him suffise
ffor all*e* þe good he spendeþ þer aboute
he lese schal þer-ofꝭ haue I no doute
Who so þatꝭ listꝭ to outen his folye
letꝭ him come forþ and lerne to multiplie
And eu*er*y man þatꝭ haþ aughtꝭ in his cofre
latꝭ him appere and wexe a philosophre
As-scaunce þatꝭ craftꝭ is so lighꝭ for to lere
Nay nay god wootꝭ al be he monkꝭ or frere /
Preste or Chanoñ or eny oþer wighꝭ
þough he sitte atꝭ his bookꝭ boþe day and nighꝭ
In lernyngꝭ ofꝭ þis eluyssh̄ nyce lore /
Al is in veyn and par de moche more
Is to lerne a lewed man þis sotilte
ffy speke nouȝtꝭ þ*er*ofꝭ for it/ wol notꝭ be
Al cowde he letterure or couþe he non
As in effecte he schal fynde it al on
ffor boþe tuo by my saluacioñ
Concluden in multiplicacioñ
I-liche wel whan þey han all*e* y-do
This is to seyn þey faille boþe tuo
ȝitꝭ forȝatꝭ I to moche rehersaille
Ofꝭ watres corosifꝭ and ofꝭ lymaille
And ofꝭ bodyes mollificacioñ
And also ofꝭ here induracioñ

[leaf 182]

Oyles ablucioñ and metall*e* fusible
To tellen all*e* wolde passen ony bible
þat' owher is wherfore as for þe beste
Of' all*e* þise names now wole I me reste
ffor as I trowe I haue ȝou told ynoughh
To reysen a feende loke he neuer so roughh
A nay let' be þy philosophres ston
Elixir cleped we sechen faste echoon
ffor hadde we him þan were we syker ynoughh
But' vnto god of' heuene I make avow
ffor all*e* oure craft' whan we han al y-do
And al oure sleighte / he wol not' come vs to
He haþ vs maad spende moche good
ffor sorwe of' which almost' we wexen wood
But' þat' good hope crepeþ in oure herte
Supposyng' euere þoughh we sore smerte
To be releuyd by him aftirward
Supposyng' and hope is scharp and hard
I warne ȝou wel it' is to seken euere
þat' future temps haþ maad men disseuere
In trust' þ*er*-of' fram al þat' euer þey hadde
ȝit' of' þat' art' þey couþe not' wexe sadde
ffor vnto hem it is a bitterswete
So semeþ it' for ne hadde þey but a scheete
Which þat' þey mighte wrappe hem In a nighht
And a bak' to walken in by day lighht'
þey wolde hem sellen and spenden on þis craft'
They can nouȝt' stynte til no þing' be laft' [leaf 182, back]
And euermore wher þat' euer þey gon
men may hem knowe by smel of' Bremston
ffor al þe world þey stynken as a goot
here sauour is so Rammisshh and so hoot'
That' þoughh a man from hem a myle be
That' sauour wol enfecte him trusteþ me
lo þus by smellyng' and by þred bare array
If' þat' men list' þis folk' þey knowe may

And if a man wol aske him priuely
Why þey ben cloþed so vnþriftily
Right anon þey wole rownen in his eere
And seye if þay aspyed were
Men wolde hem sle by cause of here science
lo þus þis folk bytrayen Innocence
Passe ouer þis I go my tale vnto
Er þen þe pot be on þe fyr y-do
Of metals wiþ a certein quantite
My lord hem tempreþ and no man but he
Now he is gon. I dar say boldely
ffor as men sein he can do craftily
Algate I wot wel he haþ such a name
And ȝit ful ofte he renneþ in þe blame
And wite ȝe how ful ofte it happeþ so
The pot tobrekeþ and far wel alle is go
Þise metals ben of so gret violence /
Oure walles may not make hem resistence
But if þey were wrouȝt of lym and ston
Þey percen so and þoruȝ þe wal þey gon
And some of hem synken in to þe ground
Þus haue we lost by tymes many a pound
And somme are scatered al þe floor aboute
Somme lepen in to þe roof wiþouten doute
Þough þat þe fende nought in oure sighte him schewe
I trowe þat he wiþ vs be þat schrewe
In helle wher þat he is lord and sire /
Ne is þer no more woo ne angur nor Ire [leaf 183]
Whan þat oure pot is broke as I haue sayd
Euery man chit and halt him yuel payd
Som seyde it was long on þe fyr makyng
Somme sayde nay it was on þe blowyng
Þan was I fered for þat was myn office
Straw *quod* þe þridde ȝe ben lewed and nyce
It was not tempred as it oughte be /
Nay *quod* þe ferþe stynt and herkne me

By cause oure fyr was nat' made of' bech
þat' is þe cause non oþer so peech
I can not' telle wher-on it is a long'
But' wel I wot' gret' stryf' is vs among'
What' quod my lord þer is nomore to done /
Of þise periles I wil be war eft' sone /
I am right' syker þat' þe pot' was crased
Be as be may be ȝe no þing' amased
As vsage is let' swope þe floor as swyþe
Pluk' vp ȝour herte and be ȝe glad and bliþe
The mullok' on an heep y-swoped was
And on þe floor cast' a kaneuas
And al þis mullok' in a Syue y-þrowe
And y-sifted and y-plucked many a þrowe
Parde quod oon som what' of' oure metal
ȝet' is þer heere þough we haue not' aH
And þough þis þing' myshapped haþ as now
Anoþer tyme it may be wel ynow
vs moste putte oure good in aduenture /
A marchañt' parde may not' ay endure /
Trustneþ me wel in his prosperite
Som tyme his good is drowned in þe see /
And som tyme comeþ it' sauf' vnto þe londe
Pees quod my lord þe nexte tyme I wol fonde
To bringe oure crafte alle in anoþer plyt'
And but' I do sires lat' me haue þe wyte
Ther was defaute in somwhat' wel I woot'
Anoþer seyde þe fyr was ouer hoot'
But' be it' hoot' or cold I dar seye þis
þat' we concluden euremore amys /
We faille of' þat' which þat' we wolde haue /
And in oure madnesse euremore we raue
And whan we ben togidere euerich on
Euery man semeþ as wys as Salomon
But' alle þing' which þat' semeþ as þe goolde /
Is nat golde as I haue herd it' tolde /

[leaf 183, back]

GROUP G. § 3. CAN.-YEOMAN'S PREAMBLE. **Corpus MS.**

Ne euery appul þat' is fair at' ye
Ne is not' good what' so men clappe or crye /
Right' so lo fareþ it' amonges vs
he þat' semeþ þe wysest' by Ihesus
Is most' fool whan it' comeþ to þe preef'
And he þat' semeþ trewest' is a þeef'
That schul ȝe knowe er þat' I fro ȝou wende /
By þat' I of' my tale haue maad an ende

[*No break in the MS.*]

[*THE TALE.*]

Ther is a chanoun) of' Religio*un*
Amonges vs wolde enfecte al a toun
þough it' as gret' were as was Nynyue /
Rome Alisandre. Troye and oþre þre
his sleightes and his infinite falsnesse /
þer couþe noman writen as I gesse /
þough þat' he mig*h*te lyuen a þousend 3eer
In all*e* þis world of' fal[s]nesse nys his peer
ffor in his termes he wole him so wynde
And speke his wordes in so sleig*h* a kynde
Whan he co*m*mune schal wiþ ony wig*h*t'
What' he wol make him dote anon rig*h*t'
But' it' þe feend be as his seluen is /
fful many a man haþ he begyled er þis
And wile if' þat' he may lyue a while /
And 3it' men ryden and gon ful many a myle
him for to seeke and haue his aqueyntance
Nou3t' knowyng' of' his false gouernance /
And if' ye lust' to 3iue me audience
I wol it' tellen here in 3oure p*re*sence [leaf 184]
But' worschipful Chanoñ religious
Ne demeþ nou3t' þat' I sclaundre 3our hous
Al þough my tale of' a Chanoñ be
Of' eue*r*y ordre som schrewe is parde
And god forbede þat' alle a compaignie
Scholde rewe a synguler mannes folye
To sclaundre 3ou it' is not' myn entent'
But' to correcten þat' mys I-ment'

This tale nas nat' oonly told for 3ou
But' eek' for oþer mo 3e wot' wel how
That' amonges cristes apostles twelue
Ther was no traytour but' Iudas himselue
þanne why scholde þe remenañt' alle haue blame
That' gulteles were by 3ou sey I þe same
Sauf' oonly þis if' 3e wiln herkne me
If' ony Iudas in 3oure couent' be
Remeueþ him by tyme I 3ou rede
If' schame or losse may causen ony drede
And beþ no þing' displesed I 3ou pray
But' in þis caas herkneth what' I say

IN londoñ was a prest' an annueler
That' þer-Inne dwelled hadde many a 3eer
Which was so plesañt / and so *ser*uisable /
Vnto þe wyf' wher he was at' þe table
That' sche wolde suffre him no þing' for to pay
ffor bord nor cloþing' wente he non so gay
And spendyng' siluer had he rigħt' ynoughħ
þer-of' no force I wol procede as now /
And telle forþ my tale of' þe Chanoñ
þat' brou3te þis prest to confusioñ
This false Chanoñ cam vpon a day
vnto þe prestes chambre þer he lay
Bysechíng' him to lene him a certeyn
Of' golde and he wold quite it' him ageyn
leneþ me a mark' q*uod* he but' dayes þre
And at' my day I wol it' quite þe [leaf 184, back]
And if' so be þat' þou fynde me fals
Anoþer day hang' me vp by þe hals
This prest' him tok' a mark' and þat' as swiþe
And þis Chanoun him þanked often siþe
And took' his leue and wente forth his wey
And atte þridde day brou3t' his money
And to þis prest' he took' þis gold a3ein
Ther-of' þis prest' was glad and fayn

Certes q*uod* he no þing anoyeth me
To lene a man a noble or tuo or þre
Or what þing were in my possessioñ
Whan he so trewe is of condicioñ
þat in no wise he breke wole his day
To swich a man I can neuer say nay
What q*uod* þis Chanoñ scholde I be vntrewe
Nay þat were þing fallen al of þe newe
Trouþe is a þing þat I wol euer kepe /
Vnto þe day in which þat I schal crepe
in to my graue and elles god forbede
Bileeueþ þis as siker as is 3oure Crede
God þanke I and in good tyme be it sayd
þat þer was neuer man 3it euel payd
ffor gold ne siluer þat he to me lente
Ne neuere falshede in myn herte I mente
And sire q*uod* he now of my priuyte
Siþens 3e so goodlich haue ben to me
And kiþed to me so gret gentilnesse
Somwhat to quite with 3oure kyndenesse
I wol 3ou schewe and if 3ou lest to leere /
I schal it schewe to 3ou anon right heere
how I kan worchen in philosophie
Takeþ good heed 3e schuln seen wel at ye
That I wol don a maystry ar I go
3e quoþ þe prest / 3e sire and wil 3e so
Marie þer of I p*ray* 3ou hertily
At 3oure comaundement sire trewely [leaf 185]
Quoþ þe Chanoñ and elles god forbede
lo how þis þeef couþe his seruise beede
fful soþ it is þat such profred seruise
Stynkeþ as witnessen þise olde wise
And þat ful sone I wol it verefye
In þis Chanoñ is roote of alle treccherie
þat eueremore delyt haþ and gladnesse/
Suche feendly þoughtes in his herte impresse /

how cristes poeple he may to meschief bringe
God kepe vs from his fals dissimilynge
What wiste þis prest wiþ whom þat he delte
Ne of his harm comynge no þing he felte
O sely prest o sely Innocent
Wiþ coueytise anon þou schalt be blent
O graceles ful blynd is þy conceyt
No þing artow war of þe deceyt
Which þat þis fox y-schapen haþ to þe
his wyly wrenches þou mayst nouȝt fle
Wher-fore to go to þe conclusioñ
þat referreþ to þi confusioñ
vnhappy man anon I wol me hiȝe
To telle þin vnwitte and þy folye
And eek þe falsnesse of þat oþer wrecche
As ferforþ as my connynge wol strecche
This Chanoñ was my lord ȝe wolde weene
Sire oste in faith and by þe heuen quene
It was anoþer chanoun and nat he
That can an hundred fold more sotyltee
he haþ bytrayed folkes many tyme
Of his falsnesse it/ dulleþ me to Ryme
Euer whan I speke of his falshede
ffor schame of him my chekes wexen reede
Algates þey bygynne for to glowe
ffor reednesse haue I now right wel I knowe
In my visage for fumes diuerse
Of metals whiche ȝe haue herd me reherce [leaf 185, back]
Consumed and wasted han my reednesse /
Now take heede of þis Chanoñs cursednesse
Sire quod he to þe prest lat ȝoure man gon
ffor quyk siluer þat we it hadde anon
And lat him bringe vnces tuo or þre
And whan he comeþ as faste schul ȝe see
A wonder þing which ȝe say neuer ar þis
Sire q*uod* þe prest it schal ben don y-wys

he bad his seruañt fechen him) his þing'
And he al redy' was at' his biddyng'
And wente him forþ and cam anon agayn
Wiþ þis quyk' siluer schortly for to sayn
And tok' þis vnces þre to þe Chanoñ
And he it leyde faire and wel a doun
And bad þe *ser*uañt coles for to bringe
þat he anon mighte go to his worchinge
The coles right' anon weren y-fette
And þis chanoñ tok' out' a crosselette
Of his bosom and schewed it' þe prest'
This Instrument' q*uod* he which þat þou seest
Tak' in þin hond and put' þiself' þ*er* Inne
Of' þis quyk' siluer an vnce and here bygynne
In þe name of' crist' to wexe a Philosophre
Ther ben ful fewe which þat' I wolde profre
To schewen hem þus mochel of' my science
ffor ȝe schuln seen heere by exp*er*ience
þat' þis quyk' siluer I wol mortefye
Right' in ȝoure sight' anon wiþoute lye
And make it' as good siluer and as fyn
As þer is ony in ȝoure purs or myn
Or elles where and make it malliable/
And elles holde me fals and vnable
Amonges folk' euere to appere
I haue a poudre here þat coste me deere
schal make al good for it' is cause of' all
My connynge which þat' I ȝou schewe schall [leaf 186]
Voydeth ȝoure man) and lat' him be þ*er*oute /
And schitte þe dore whiles we ben aboute /
Oure pryuyte þat' noman vs espie
Whiles we werken in þis philosophie /
Al as he bad fulfilled was in dede /
This ilke s*er*uañt' anon right' out ȝede
And his maistrer schitte þe dore anon)
All to here labour speedily þey gon

This prest at þis cursed chanōns byddyng
Vpon þe fire anon sette þis þing
And blew þe fyr and busyed him ful faste
And þis chanoñ in to þis Crosselet caste
A poudre not I wher-of þat it was
I-maad oþer of chalk oþer of glas
Or som what elles was not worþ a flye
To blynde wiþ þis prest and bad him hye
þise coles for to couchen al aboue
þe cresselet for in tokne þat I þe loue
Quoþ þis Chanoñ þine hondes tuo
Schulle worche alle þing which as schal be do
Graunt mercy quod þe prest and was ful glad
And couchede coles as þe Chanoñ bad
And whils he besy was þis feendly wrecche
þis false Chanoñ þe foule feend him fecche
Out of his bosom took a bechene cole /
In which ful sotilly was maad an hole
And þer Inne put was of siluer lymaille
An vnce and stopped was wiþoute faille
This hole wiþ wex to kepe þe lymaille In
And vnderstondeþ þat þis false gyn
Was not made þere but it was maad bifore
And oþere þinges I schal telle more /
here aftirward which þat he wiþ him broughte
Er he cam þer to begyle him he þoughte
And so he dide er þey wente a twynne /
Til he hadde torned him couþe he not blynne [leaf 186, back]
It dulleþ me whan þat I of him speke
On his falshede fayn wolde I me wreke /
If I wiste how . but he is heer and þere /
he is so variaunt þat he abyt no where /
But takeþ heed now sires for goddes loue
He took his cole of which I spak aboue
And in his hond he bar it priuely
And whiles þe prest couchide busily

The coles as I tolde ȝou er þis /
This Chanoñ sayde freend ȝe don amys
This is nought' couched as it' ought'e be
But' sone I schal amenden it' q*uod* he
Now lat me medle þerwiþ but a while
ffor of' ȝou haue I pite by seint' Gyle
ȝe ben right' hoot' I se wel how ȝe swete
haue heer a cloþ and wype awey þe wete
And while þat' þe prest' him wyped has
This Chanoñ took' his cole I schrewe his fas
And leyde it' vppon abouen þe myddeward
Of' þe Crosselet' and blew wel aftirward
Til þat' þe coles gonne faste brenne
Now ȝif' vs drinke q*uod* þe Chanoñ þenne
as swiþe it' schal be wel I vndertake
Sitte we doun and let' vs merie make
And whan þe Chanoñs bechene cole
Was brent' all*e* þe lymail out' of' þe hole
In to þe Crosselet' anon fel doun
And so it' moste neede by resoñ
Syns it' so euene aboue couched was
But' þer of' wiste no þing' þe prest' allas
he demed all*e* þe coles liche goode
ffor of' þe sleight' no þing' he vnderstoode
And whan þis alkamistre say his tyme
Riseþ vp sire prest' and stondeþ byme
And for I wot' wel Ingot' haue ȝe non
Goþ walkeþ forþ and bring' a chalk' ston [leaf 187]
ffor I wol make it' of' þe same schapp*e*
þat' is an Ingot' if' I may haue happ*e*
And bring wiþ ȝou a bolle oþer a panne
fful of' water and ȝe schul see þanne
How þat' oure busynesse schal happe & preeue
And ȝit' for ȝe schul haue no mysbyleeue
Ne wrong' conceyt' of' me in ȝoure absence
I wol not' ben out' of' ȝoure p*re*sence

But' go with ȝou and come with ȝou agayn
The chambre dore schortly for to sayn
þey opeynd and schette and wente forþ here weye
And forþ wiþ hem þey caryed þe keye
And comen agayn wiþouten eny delay
What' scholde I tarie al þe longe day
he took' þe chalk' and schoop it' in þe wyse
Of' an yngot' as I schal ȝou deuyse
I say he took' out' of' his owne sleeue
A teyne of' Siluer euele mote he cheeue
Which þat' was but' an vnce of' weigħt
And takeþ heede now of' his cursed sleigħt
he schop his Ingot' in lengþe and in brede
Of' þe theyne wiþouten eny drede
So slyly þat' þe prest' it not' aspyde
And in his sleeue again he gan it' hyde
And from þe fyre took' vp his matiere /
And in to þe Ingot' it' putte wiþ merye cheere
And in to þe watir vessel he it' caste
Whan þat' him liste and bad þe prest' as faste
loke what' þer' is / put' in þin hond and grope
Thou schalt' fynde þere siluer as I hope
What' deuyl of helle schuld it' elles be
Schafyng' of' siluer siluer is p*ar*de
he putte in his hond and took' vp a teyne
Of' silurer fyn and glad in eu*er*y veyne
Was þis prest' whan he saugħ þat' it was so
Goddes blessyng' and his modres also [leaf 187, back]
And all*e* halwes haue ȝe sire Chanoñ
Seyde þe p*rest'* and I here malisoñ
But' and ȝe vouche sauf' to teche me
þis noble crafte and þis sotilte
I wol be ȝoure in all*e* þat' euer I may
Quoþ þe Chanoñ ȝit' wol I make assay
The seconde tyme þat' ȝe mowe take heede
And ben expert' of' þis and in ȝoure neede

Anoþer day in myn absence /
þis discipline and þis crafty science
¶ letꝫ take anoþer vnce q*uod* he þo
Ofꝫ quykꝫ siluer wiþoute wordes mo
And do þerwiþ as ȝe han don ar þis
Wiþ þatꝫ oþer which þatꝫ now siluer is
þis prestꝫ him busieþ in al þatꝫ he can
To don as þis Chanōn þis cursede man
Comaundeþ him and faste blew þe fire
ffor to come to þeffecte ofꝫ his desire
And þis Chanōn rightꝫ in þe mene while
Al redy was þis prestꝫ eftꝫ to begyle
And for a contynaunce in his hond bar
An holoughꝫ stikke takꝫ heede and be war
In þe ende ofꝫ which an vnce and no more
Ofꝫ siluer lymaile putꝫ was al bifore
Was in his coole and stopped wiþ wex wel
ffor to kepe in his lymayl euery del
And whiles þis prestꝫ was in his businesse
This Chanoñ wiþ his stikke gan him dresse
To him anon and his poudre caste In
As he dede er þe deuel outꝫ ofꝫ his skyn
him torne I p*ray* to god for his falshede
ffor he was euer fals in oþe and dede
And wiþ his stikke aboue þe crosselette
þatꝫ was ordeigned wiþ þat false gette
he stereþ þe coles til itꝫ relente gan
The wax agayn þe fyr as eu*er*y man
Butꝫ itꝫ a fool be wootꝫ wel and mootꝫ neede
And al þatꝫ in þe hole was out ȝede
And in to þe Crosseletꝫ hastily itꝫ fel
The prestꝫ supposede noþingꝫ but wel
Butꝫ busyed him faste and was wonder fayn
Supposyngꝫ nouȝtꝫ butꝫ trouþe soþ to sayn
he was so glad I can nouȝtꝫ exp*resse*
In no maner his merþe and his gladnesse

1253 1257 1261 1265 1269 1273 1277 [leaf 188] 1281 1285

And þe chanoñ he profred eftˢ sone
Body and good ȝe q*uod* þe Chanōn soone
þough pore I be crafty þou schalt/ me fynde
I warne þe ȝitˢ is þer more behynde
Is þer eny coper here Inne seyde he
ȝe sire q*uod* þe prestˢ I trowe þer bee
Elles go bey som and þat as swithe
Now sire go forþ þy way and hy the
And went his way and wiþ þis coper he cam
And þis Chanōn in his hond it nam
And ofˢ þatˢ coper weyde outˢ butˢ an vnce
Al to symple is my tonge to p*ro*no*u*nce
his moustre and his witˢ þe doublenesse
Ofˢ þis Chanoñ roote ofˢ Cursednesse
he semyd freendly to hem þatˢ knewe him nought
Butˢ he was feendly boþe in werkˢ and þouȝtˢ
Itˢ wyrieþ me to telle ofˢ his falsnesse
And naþeles ȝetˢ wol I itˢ expresse
To þatˢ entent þatˢ men may be war þer by
And for non oþer cause trewely
he putte þis vnce ofˢ coper in to þe Crosselette
And ofˢ þe fyur as swiþe he haþ itˢ sette
And kastˢ in poudre and made þe prestˢ to blowe
And in his worchingˢ for to stoupe lowe
As he dide erst and al nas butˢ a Iape
Rightˢ as him liste þe prestˢ he made his ape
And afterward in to þe Ingotˢ he it caste
And in þe panne putte itˢ atte laste / [leaf 188, back]
Ofˢ water and in he putˢ his owne hand
And in his sleeue as ȝe byforn hand
herde me telle he hadde a siluer teyne
he slyly tookˢ itˢ outˢ þis cursed heyne
vnwetyngˢ þis prestˢ ofˢ his false craftˢ
And in þe pannes botme he haþ itˢ laftˢ
And in þe water rombleþ to and fro
And wonder pryuyly tokˢ itˢ vp also

þe coper teyne noughtˈ knowyngˈ þis prest/
And hidde itˈ and hente him by þe breestˈ
And to him spakˈ and þus sayde in his game
Stowpeþ a doun by god ȝe ben to blame
helpeþ me now as I dide ȝou whiler
Putˈ in ȝoure hand and lokeþ what is þer
þis prestˈ tokˈ vp þis siluer teyne anon
And þanne seyde þe chanōn letˈ vs gon
Wiþ þise þre teynes whiche þatˈ we haue wroughtˈ
To som goldsmith and witeˈ ifˈ it be oughtˈ
ffor by my faiþ I nolde for myn hond
Butˈ ifˈ þei were siluer fyn and good
And þatˈ as swiþe proued schal it be
Vnto þe goldsmith wiþ þise teynes þre
þey wente and putte þise teynes in assay
To fyr and hamer mightˈ no man say nay
Butˈ þey were as hem ouȝte for to be
þis sottide prestˈ who was gladder þan he
Was neuer bryd gladder aȝeins þe day
Ne nightyngale in þe sesoñ ofˈ May
Was neuere non þatˈ liste better to synge
Ne lady lustiere in Carolynge /
And for to speke ofˈ loue and wo*m*manhede
Ne knightˈ in armes don an hardy dede
To stonden in grace ofˈ his lady deere
þan hadde þis prestˈ þis craftˈ to lere
And to þe chanoñ þus he spak and sayde
ffor þe loue ofˈ god þatˈ for vs alle deyde / [leaf 189]
And as I may deserue itˈ vnto ȝow
Whatˈ schal þis receytˈ coste telleþ now /
By oure lady q*uod* þe chanoñ itˈ is deere
I warne ȝou for saue I and a frere /
In Engelond þ*er* can no man it make
No fors q*uod* he now sire for goddes sake
Whatˈ schal I paye tel me I ȝou pray
I-wys q*uo*d he it/ is ful deere I say

Sire at oo word if þat þe list it haue
ȝe schulle paye fourty pound so god me saue
And ne were þe frendschipe þat ȝe dide er þis
To me ȝe scholde paye more y-wys
This prest þe somme of .xl. pound anon.
Of nobles fette and took hem euerychon
To þis chanoñ for þis ilke receyt
Al his worchinge was fraude and deceyt
Sire prest he seyde I kepe for to haue no loos
Of my craft for I wolde it were kept cloos
And as ȝe loueþ me kepeþ it secre
ffor and men knewen al my subtilte
By god men wolde haue so gret envye
To me by cause of my philosophie
I scholde be deed þer were non oþer weye
God it forbede *quod* þe preest what seye
ȝet hadde I leuer spenden al þe good
Which þat I haue and elles waxe I wood
þan þat ȝe schulde falle in such meschees
ffor ȝoure good wil sire haue ȝe right good preef
Quoþ þe chanoñ and sire wol *graunt mercy*
he wente his way and neuer þe prest he sey
After þat day and whan þat þis prest scholde
maken assay at swich tyme as he wolde
Of þis receyt far wel it wolde not be
lo þus byiaped and bygyled was he
þus makeþ he his introduccioñ
To bringe folk to here destruccioñ [leaf 189, back]
Considereþ sires how þat in eche astate
Bitwixe men and gold þer is debate
So ferforþ þat vnneþes þer is non
This multiplyȝing blendeþ so many oon
þat in good faiþ I trowe þat it be
þe cause grettest of þis skarsete
This philosophres speken so mystily
In þis craft þat men can not come *þer*by

ffor ony witte þat men han now a dayes
þey may wel chitre and Iangle as don þis Iayes
And in here termes sette lust' and peyne
But' to here *pur*pos schul þey neuer atteyne
A man may lightliche lerne if' he haþ ought
To multiplye and brynge his good to nouȝt'
lo such a lucre is in þis lusty game
A mannes merþe it wol torne alle to g*ra*me
And empte also grete and heuye purses
And make folk' to purchacen curses
Of' hem þat han þer*to* here good y-lent'
O fy for schame þey þat' haue be brent
Allas can þey nat' fle þe fyres hete
ȝe þat' it' vsen I rede ȝe it' lete
lest' ȝe lese al for bet' þan neuer is late
Neuer to þriue were to longe a date
þouȝh ȝe prolle ay ȝe schulle it neuer fynde
ȝe ben as bolde as is bayard þe blynde
þat' blundreth forþ and per*il* casteþ he non
he is as bold to renne a-gayn a stoon
As for to go bysydes in þe weye
So fare ȝe þat' multiplie I seye
If' þat' ȝoure yȝen may not' seen arigȝt
lokeþ þat' ȝoure mynd lakke nougȝt' his sigȝt
ffor þouȝh ȝe loke neuer so brode and stare /
ȝe schulle nat' wynne a myte in þat' chaffare
But' wasten al þat' ȝe may Rappe and renne
Wiþdrawe þe fir lest' it' so faste brenne [leaf 190]
Medleþ nomore wiþ þat' art' I mene
ffor if' ȝe doon ȝour þrift' is gon ful clene /
And right' as swithe I wol ȝou telle heere
What' þat' þe philosophres sein in þis matere
lo þus seiþ arnold of' þe newe toun
As his Rosarie makeþ mencioun
he seiþ right' þus wiþouten eny lye
þer may no man mercurie mortifie

But' if' it' be wiþ his broþeres knowleching'
how þat' he which þat first' seyde þis þing'/
Of' Philosophres fader was hermes /
he saiþ how þat' þe dragoñ douteles
Ne dyeþ not' but' if' he be slayn
Wiþ his broþ*er* and þat' is for to sayn
By þe dragoñ mercurie and non oþ*er*
he vnderstood þat' bremston were his broþ*er*
þat' on of' Sol and luna were y-drawe
And þ*er*fore sayde he tak' heed to my sawe
lat' no man busye him þis art' for to seche
But' he þat' þe entencioñ and þe speche
Of' philosophres vnderstonde can
And if' he do he is a lewed man
ffor þis science and þis connyng' q*uod* he /
Is of' þe secre of' Secrees parde
Also þer was a disciple of' Plato
That' on a tyme sayde his mayster to
As his book' Somer wil bere witnesse
And þis was his demaunde in soþfastnesse
Telle me þe name of' þe pryuy stoon
And plato answerde vnto him anon
Tak' þe stoon þat' titanos men name
Which is þat' q*uod* he magnasia þe same /
Seyde Plato ȝee Sire and is it þus
This is ignotu*m* p*er* ignocius
What' is magnasia goode sire I p*ray*
It' is a water þat' is maad I say [leaf 190, back]
Of' elementes foure q*uod* Plato
Tel me þe roche goode sire q*uod* he þo
Of' þat' water if' it' be ȝour wille
Nay nay q*uo*d Plato certeyn þat' I nylle.
þe Philosophres were sworn echon
þat' þey scholde discou*er*e it to no mon
Ne in no book' it' write in no manere
ffor vnto crist' it' is so leef' and deere

þat' he wil nat þat' it' discou*er*ed be
But' where it' likeþ to his deite
Man to enspire and eek' for to defende
Whom þat' him likeþ lo þis is þe ende /
Thanne conclude I þus siþens þat' god of heuene
Ne wole nat þat' þe Philosophres neuene
how þat' a man schal come vnto þis stoon
I rede as for þe beste lat' it' goon
ffor who so maketh god his adu*er*sarie
As for to worche eny þing' in contrarie /
vnto his wille certes neuer schal he þriue
þough þat' he multiplie terme of' his lyue
And þere a poynt for ended is my tale
God sende eu*er*y trewe man boote of' his bale ame*n*

CORPUS 424 (6-T. 574)

GROUP C. FRAGMENT IV.

§ 1. THE DOCTOR'S TALE.

CORPUS MS.

¶ The doctour of phisik [*on leaf* 190, *back.*]

THer was as telleþ vs Titus lyueus
A knigħt þat cleped was *vir*gineus
ffulfilled of honoures and worþinesse
And strong of frendes and of gret richesse
A doughter he hadde by his wyf
And neuere hadde he mo in alle his lyf
ffair was þis mayde in excellent beaute
Abouen eu*er*y wigħt þat man may se
ffor nature haþ with souerein diligence
fformed hire in so gret excellence
As þough sche wolde say lo I nature
Thus can I forme and peinte a creature
Whan þat me list who can me countrefete [leaf 191]
Pigmalion nouȝt þough he alwey forge and bete
Or graue or peynte for I dar wel sayn
Apollus ȝephirus schulde worche in vayn
To graue or paynte or forge or bete
ȝif þey p*re*sumede me for to countirfete
ffor he þat is þe formour p*ri*ncipal
haþ maad me his viker gen*er*al
To forme and peynte ech erþely creature
Right as me lyst for al þing is in my cure
vnder þe moone þat may wane and waxe
And for my werke no þing wol I axe

GROUP C. § 1. DOCTOR'S TALE. Corpus MS.

My lord and I ben fully at' acord
I made hire to þe worschip of' my lord
So do I alle myn oþre creatures
Of' what' colour þey be or what' figures
Thus semeþ me þat' nature wolde say
This mayde was of' age .xij. ȝeer and tway
In which þat' nature haþ such delyt'
ffor right' as sche can paynte as lily whit'
And rody as rose right' wiþ such peynture
Sche peynted haþ þis noble creature /
Er sche was born vppon hire lymes fre
Were also brigħt' as such colours scholde be /
And Phebus dyed haþ his tresses grete
like to þe stremes of' his boornyd hete
And if' þat' excellent' was hire beaute
A þousend fold more v*er*tuous was sche
In hire ne lakkeþ no condicioñ
þat' is to preise as by discrecioñ
As wel in body as gost' chaste was sche
ffor which sche floured in virginite
Wiþ alle humilite and abstinence
Wiþ alle attemp*er*ance and pacience
Wiþ mesure eek' and beryng' of' array
Discret' sche was in answering' alway
þough sche were wys as Pallas dar I seyn [leaf 191, back]
hire faucond eek' ful wo*m*manly and pleyn
None counterfeted termes hadde sche
To seme wys but' after hire degre
Sche spak' and alle hire wordes more and lesse
Sownyng' in vertue and in gentillesse
Schamefast' sche was in maydens schamefastnesse
Constant' in herte and euere in busynesse
To dryue hire oute of' hire slogardye
Bachus hadde of' hir mouþ no maystrie
ffor will and þoughť doon venus encrece
As men in fyr wol casten oyle or grece /

And of hire owne vertue constreyned
Sche haþ ful ofte tyme hire seek feyned
ffor þat sche wolde flee þe companye /
Wher likly was to treten of folye
As is at festes. Reueles. and at Daunces
That ben occasioñs of dalyaunces
Suche þinges maken children for to be
To sone rype and bolde as men may se
Which is ful *peri*lous and haþ ben 3ore
ffor al to sone may sche lerne lore /
Of boldenesse whan sche is a wijf
And 3e maystresses in 3oure olde lyf
þat lordes doughtres han in gouernañce /
Ne takeþ of my word no displesañce
þinges þat ben sette in gouernynges
Of lordes doughtres only for tuo þinges
Ouþer for 3e han kept 3our honeste /
Oþer 3e han falle in frelete
And knowen wel ynough þe olde daunce
And konne forsake fully meschaunce
ffor euermo þer-fore for cristes sake /
kepeþ wel þo þat 3e vndertake
A þeef of venysoñ þat haþ forlaft
his likorousnesse and alle his theues craft
Kan kepe a forest best of ony man [leaf 192]
Now kepeþ hem wel for and 3e wil 3e can
lokeþ wel to no vice þat 3e assente
lest 3e be dampned for 3oure yuel entente
ffor who so doþ a tretour is certayn
And takeþ heed of þat þat I schal sayn
Of alle tresoun suffreyn pestilence
Is whan a wight betrayeþ Innocence
3e fadres and 3e mödres eek also
þough 3e haue children be it oon or mo
3oure is þe charge of alle here sufferañce
Whil þey ben vnder 3oure gouernañce

Beþ war þat' by ensample of' 3oure lyuynge
Owþer by necligence in chastysynge
þat' þey ne p*er*issche I dar wel seye
If' þat' þey don 3e schulle ful sore abeye
vnder a schepperde softe and necligent
þe wolf' haþ many a scheep and lamb torent'
Sufficeth oon ensample now as heere
ffor I moot' torne a3en to my mateere /
This mayde of' which I telle my tale exp*r*esse /
Sche kepte hir self' hir needed no maistresse
ffor in hire lyuyng' maydens mig*h*te rede /
As in a book' eu*er*y good word and dede
þat' longeþ to a mayde v*er*tuous
Sche was so prudent' and so bountyuous
ffor which out' sprong' þe fame on euery syde
Boþe of' hire beaute and of' hire bounte wyde
þat' þurg*h* þe lond þey preised hire echone
That' louede vertu saue envye alone
þat' sory is of' oþer mennes wele
And glad is of' his sorwe and vnhele
The doctour makeþ þis discripcioñ
þis mayde wente on a day in-to þe toun
Toward þe temple wiþ hire mooder deere
As is of' 3onge maydens þe maneere
Now was þer a Iustice in þe toun [leaf 192, back]
That' gou*er*nour was of' þat' regioñ
And so bifelle þis Iuge his yhen caste
vppon þis mayde hire ful faste
As sche cam forth*h*by þer þe Iuge stood
Anon his herte chaungeþ and his mood
So was he caug*h*t' wiþ beaute of' þis mayde /
And to himself' ful priuely he sayde /
This mayde schal be my*n* for ony man
Anon þe feend in-to his herte ran
And taug*h*t' him sodeynly by what' sleig*h*te
þe mayde to his purpos wynne he mig*h*te

ffor certes by no force ne by no meede
him þoght/ he was not' able for to speede /
ffor he was strong' of' freendes and eek' sche
Confermed was in such souereyn beaute
þat' wel he wiste he might' hire neuer wynne
As for to make hire wiþ hire body synne
ffor which wiþ gret' deliberacioñ
he sente after a clerk' in-to þe touñ
The which he knew for subtil and for bold
This Iuge vnto þis clerk' his tale haþ told
In secre wise and made him to assure /
he scholde telle it' to no creature
And if' he dide he scholde leese his heed
Whan assented was þis cursed reed
Glad was þe Iuge and made glad chere /
And 3af' him 3iftes precious and deere /
Whan schapen was al þis conspiracie
ffrom poynt' to poynt' how þat' his leccherie
Parformed schulde be ful subtilly
as 3e schal here aftirward openly
hom goþ þis clerk' þat' highte Claudius
þis false Iuge þat' highte Apius
So was his name for it is no fable /
But' knowen for an historial þing' notable
The sentence of' it' soþ is out' of' doute [leaf 193]
þis false Iuge goþ now faste aboute
To hasten his delyt' al þat' he may
And so bifelle sone after on a day
þis false Iuge as telleþ vs þe story
As he was woned sat' in his consistory
And 3af' his domes vpon sondry cas
This false clerk' cam forþ a wel good paas
And seyde lord if' þat' it' be 3our wille /
As doþ me right' vpon þis pitous bille
In which I pleyne vppon virginius
And if' þat' he wol seyn it' is not' þus

I wol proue it and fynde good witnesse
That soþ is þat my bille wol expresse
þe Iuge answerde of þis in his absence
I may not ȝiue diffinityf sentence
let don him calle and I wol gladly heere
Thou schalt haue right and no wrong heere
Virginius cam to wite þe Iuges wille
And right anon was rad þis cursed bille /
The sentence of it was as ȝe schul heere
To ȝou my lord sire Apius so deere
Schewe þ ȝoure pou*er*e s*er*uañt Claudius
how þat a knight called v*ir*ginius
Aȝens þe lawe aȝeins alle equite
holdeþ expres aȝeins þe will of me
my seruaunt which þat is my þral by right
Which from my*n* hous was stolen on a night
Whils sche was ful ȝong I wol it preue
By witnesse lord so þat ȝe ȝou not greue
Sche is nought his doughter what so he say
Wherfore my lord þe Iuge to ȝou I p*ra*y
ȝelde me my þralle if þat it be ȝour wille
lo þis was al þe sentence of þe bille
Virgineus gan vpon þe clerk biholde
But hastily er he his tale tolde /
he wolde haue defended it as scholde a knight [leaf 1⁋ 8, back]
And by witnesse of many a trewe wight
That al was fals þat seyde his aduersarie
This cursed Iuge wolde no lenger tarie /
Ne here a word more of v*ir*gineus
But ȝaf his Iuggement and seyde þus
I deme anon þis clerk his s*er*u*au*nt haue
þou schalt no lenger in þin hous hire saue
Go bring hire forth and put hire in oure warde
þis clerk schal haue his þral þus I awarde /
And whan þis worþi knight v*ir*gineus /
þurgh þe assent of þe Iuge apius

GROUP C. § 1. DOCTOR'S TALE. Corpus MS.

Moste by force his deere doughter ȝyuen
vnto þe Iuge in lecchorie to lyuen
he goþ him hom) and sette him in his halle
And leet' anon his deere douȝter calle /
And with a face deed as ayssches colde
vppon hire humble face he gan biholde
Wiþ fadres pite stiking' þorugh his herte
Al wolde he not' from his purpos conuerte
Doughter q*uod* he virginea by þy name
þer ben tuo weyes oþer deþ or schame
That' þou most' suffre allas þat' I was bore
ffor neuer þou des*er*uedest' wherfore
To deyen with a swerd or wiþ a knyf'
O deere doughter endere of' my lijf'
Which I haue fostred vp wiþ such plesaunce
þat' þou ne were out' of' my remembr*a*nce /
O doughter which þat' art' my laste wo /
And in my lijf' my laste ioye also
O ge*m*me of' chastite in pacience
Tak' þou þi deþ for þis is my sentence /
ffor loue and nat/ for hate þou most' be deed
My pitous hond moot' smyten of' þin heed
Allas þat' euer Apius þe say
þus haþ he falsly iugged þe to day
And tolde hire al þe cas as ȝe bifore [leaf 194]
han herd it' nedeþ not' to telle it more
Mercy deere fader q*uod* þis mayde
And wiþ þat' word sche boþe hire armes layde
Aboute his necke as sche was woned to dc
þe teeres barsten out' of' hire eyen tuo
And sayde goode fader schal I dye
Is þer no grace is þer no remedye
No certes deere douȝter my*n* q*uod* he
þanne ȝif' me leue fader myn q*uod* sche
My deþ to compleigne a litel space
ffor p*ar*de Ieffa ȝaf' his douȝter grace

ffor to compleyne ar he hir slough allas
And god it wot nothing was hire trespas
But that sche ran hire fader first to see
To welcome him with gret solempnite
And with that word sche felle on swown anon
And after whan hir swownyng was agon
Sche riseth vp and to hire fader sayde /
Blessed be god that I schal deye a mayde
3if me my deth er that I haue a schame
Doth with 3our child 3our wil a goddes name
And with that word sche prayeth him ful ofte
that with his swerd he schulde hir smyte softe
And with that word on swoune doun sche fel
hir fader with ful sorweful herte and fel
hire heed of smoot and by the top it hente
And to the Iuge he 3af it to presente
As he sat in his doom in consistory
Whan the Iuge it say as saith the story
He bad take him and honge him also faste
But right anon al the poeple in thraste
To saue the knight for routhe and for pite
ffor knowen was the fooles Iniquite
The poeple anon hadde suspecte in this thing
By maner of this clerkes chalangyng
That it was by thassent of Apius
They wisten wel that he was lecchorous
ffor which vnto this Apius they gon
And casten him in prison right anon
Wher as he slough himself and Claudius
that seruant was vnto this Apius
Was demed for to honge vpon a tre
But/ virgineus of his grete pite
Prayde for him that he was exiled
And elles certes he hadde be bygyled
The remenant were honged more & lesse
that consented were to his cursednesse

[leaf 194, back]

GROUP C. § 1. DOCTOR'S TALE. Corpus MS.

Here may men se how synne haþ his meryt /
Be war for noman woteh how god wol smyteh
In no degre ne in which maner wise
The worm ofh conscience wol arise
Ofh wicked lyfh þoughh ith so preuy be
þath noman wootb ofh ith buth god and he
Wheþer he be lewed man or lered
he noth how soone þath he may ben afeered
þer-fore I rede 3ou þis counseil take
fforsakeþ synne er synne 3ou forsake

GROUP C. § 2. DOCTOR-PARDONER LINK. Corpus MS.

[*on leaf* 194, *back*]

Owre oostꝫ gan for to swere as he were wood — Prologus
harrow quod he by nayles and by blood — 288
This was a cursed þeefꝫ a fals Iustise
As schamful deþ as herte can deuyse
So falle vpon his body and his bones — [*]
þe deuyl I bekenne him al at ones — [*] 292
Allas to deere boughte sche hire beaute
Wherfore I say þatꝫ alle men may se
Thatꝫ ȝiftes ofꝫ fortune or ofꝫ nature
Beþ cause ofꝫ deþ ofꝫ many a creature — 296
hire beaute was hire deþ I dar wel sayn
Allas so pitously as sche was slayn
Butꝫ her ofꝫ wil I notꝫ procede as now — [*spurious*]
Men haue ful often more harm þan prow — 300
Butꝫ trewely myn owne mayster deere — [leaf 195]
This is a pitous tale for to heere
Butꝫ naþeles passe ouer is no fors
I pray to god so saue þin gentil cors — 304
And þin vrynals and þin Iurdanes
Thyn ypocras and þin Galianes
And euery box ful ofꝫ þin letuarie
God blesse hem and oure lady seinte marie — 308
So mote I þe þou artꝫ a propre man
And ylike a prelatꝫ by seint Runyan
Sayde I nouȝtꝫ wel can I nouȝtꝫ speke in terme
Butꝫ wel I wootꝫ þou dostꝫ myn herte to erme — 312
Thatꝫ I almostꝫ haue caughtꝫ a Cardyacle /
By Corpus bones butꝫ ifꝫ I haue triacle
Oþer elles a draughtꝫ ofꝫ moyste and corny ale /
Or butꝫ I heere anoon a merye tale / — 316

GROUP C. § 2. DOCTOR-PARDONER LINK. **Corpus MS.**

Myn herte is lost' for pite of' þis mayde
þou belamy Iohn P*ar*doner he sayde
es right anon
eint Runyon
re at' þis ale stake
nke and eten of' a Cake
þise gentils bygonne to crye
lle vs of' no rybaudye
ortal þing' þat' we may leere
þenne wol we gladly heere
wys q*uod* he but I moot þynke
honest' þing' whil þat' I drinke

[*Part of the MS is cut away here*]

[1] bygynneþ þe P*ar*doneres tale folwynge

C[m] xvj[m]

LOrdynges q*uod* he in chirches whan I preche
I peyne me to haue an hauteyn speche
I ryng' it' out' as round as goþ a belle
ffor I can al by rote þat' I telle
My teeme is alway oon and euer was
[1] malor*um* est' Cupiditas
[1] whennes þat' I come
A þenne my bulles schewe I alle and some
Oure liege lordes seal is my patent
þat' schewe I first' my body to warant
That' no man be so bolde ne prest' ne clerk'
me to destourbe of' cristes holy werk'
And after þat' telle I forþ my tales
Bulles of' Popes and of' Cardinales
Of' Patriarkes and bisschoppes I schewe
And in latyn I speke wordes a fewe
To saffran wiþ my p*re*dicacioñ
And for to stere men to deuoicoñ
þanne schewe I forþ my lange cristal stones
I-crammed ful of' cloutes and of' bones
Relikes þey ben as wenen þey echone
þan haue I in latoun a schulder bone
Which þat' was of' an holy iewes scheep
Goode men say I takeþ of' my wordes keep
If' þat' þis bon be waisshe in any welle
If' kow or calf' scheep or oxe swelle
That' eny worme haþ y-bite or stronge
Touche he þis boon anon he schal be sounde

[1 *Part of the MS is cut away here*]

[leaf 195, back]

And ȝitꝫ also I seye forþermore
Ofꝫ pokkes ofꝫ scabbes and ofꝫ euery sore
Schal euery scheep be hool þatꝫ ofꝫ þis welle
Drinkeþ a draughtꝫ and take keep what I telle
Wole euery wightꝫ er þatꝫ þe cokꝫ him croweþ
And do þingꝫ þatꝫ him oweþ
ffastynge drinke ofꝫ þis welle a draught
As þilke holy iewe oure eldre ous taught
his bestes and his store schal multiplye
And sires also itꝫ heleþ Ielousie
And þey a man be falle in gelouse rage
Letꝫ make wiþ þis water his potage
And neuer schal he more his wijfꝫ mystreste
þey he in soþe a defaute by hire wiste
Al had sche taken prestes tuo or þre
heer is a myteyn eekꝫ as ȝe may see [leaf 196]
he þatꝫ his hond wol putte in þatꝫ myteyne
he schal haue multiplyyngꝫ ofꝫ his greyne
When he haþ sowen be it whete or ootes
So þatꝫ ofꝫ pens oþer elles ofꝫ grootes
And men and wommen o þingꝫ warne I ȝou
Ifꝫ any wightꝫ be in þis chirche now
Thatꝫ haþ don synne orrible þatꝫ he
Dar noughtꝫ for schame schriuen be
Or eny womman be sche ȝongꝫ or old
þatꝫ haþ y-maad hire housbonde kokewold
Such folkꝫ schuln haue no power ne grace
To offre to my relikes in þis place
And who so fyndeþ him out ofꝫ such blame
þey wole come vp and offre in goddes name
And I assoile him by þe auctorite
Which þatꝫ by bulle was y-graunted me
By þis gande haue I wonne euery ȝere
An hundred markꝫ seþenes I was pardonere
I stande likꝫ a clerkꝫ in many a pulpette
And schewe lewed poeple and doun þey sette

I preche so as ȝe haue herd byfore
And telle an hundred Iapes more /
þenne peyne I me to strecche forþ my nekke
And Estꝫ and westꝫ vpon þe poeple I bekke
As doþ a dowfe sittyngꝫ vpan a berne
myn handes and my tonge gon so ȝerne
þatꝫ is itꝫ ioye to se my busynes
Ofꝫ auarice and such oþer cursednes
Is al my prechinge to make hem fre
To ȝiue here pans and namely vnto me
ffor myn ententꝫ is nouȝtꝫ butꝫ for to wynne
And noþingꝫ for correccioñ ofꝫ synne
I rekke neuer whan þatꝫ þey ben beried
þoughñ þatꝫ here soules gon a blake beryed
ffor certes many a predicacioñ
Sowneþ ofte tyme ofꝫ yuel intencioñ [leaf 196, back]
Somme for plesaunce ofꝫ folkꝫ and for flaterie
To ben auaunced by ypocresye
And somme for veynglorie and somme for hate /
ffor whan I dar nouȝtꝫ oþerwise debate
þanne wil I stynge hem with my tonge smerte
In preachingꝫ so þatꝫ þei schal nouȝtꝫ asterte
To be diffamed falsly ifꝫ þat he
haþ trespassed to my breþeren oþer to me
ffor þough I telle nouȝtꝫ his propre name
Men schal wel knowe þatꝫ itꝫ is þe same
By symony and by oþer circumstaunces
þus quyte I folkꝫ þatꝫ doþ vs displesaunces
þus spitte I out my venym vnder hewe
Ofꝫ holynesse to seme holy and trewe
Butꝫ schortly myn entent I wil deuyse
I preche ofꝫ no þingꝫ butꝫ ofꝫ coueytise
þerfore my teeme is ȝitꝫ and euer was
Radix malorum estꝫ cupiditas /
Thus gan I preche aȝeins þe same vice
Such þatꝫ I vse and þatꝫ is auarice

GROUP C. § 3. PARDONER'S PREAMBLE. **Corpus MS.**

That' þough I my self' be gulty in þat' synne
3it' kan I make oþer folk' for to wynne
ffrom auarice and sore to repente
But' þat' nys nought' my principal entente
I preche no þing' but' for coueityse
Of' þis matiere I ought' ynough' suffise
þenne telle I of' ensamples many on
Of' olde stories longe tyme agon
ffor lewed poeple louen tales olde
Whiche þinges can þey wel reporte and holde
What trowe 3e whiles þat' I may preche
And wynne gold and siluer for I teche
That' I wol lyue in pouert' wilfully
Nay nay I þought' it' neuer trewely
ffor I wol preche and begge in sondry landes
ffor I wole do no labour wiþ myn handes [leaf 197]
And make basketes and lyue þerby
By cause I wol not' beggen ydelly
I wole none of' þe aposteles countrefete
I wole haue money chese and whete
Al were it' 3euen of' þe porest' page
Oþer of' þe porest' wydewe in a village
Al scholde here children sterue for famyne
Nay I wol drynke þe likour of' þe vyne
And haue a Ioly wenche in euery toun
But' herkneþ lordynges in conclusioñ
3oure liking' is þat' I schal telle a tale
Now I haue drunke a draught' of' corny ale
By god I hope I schal telle 3ou a þing'
þat' schal by resoun ben at' 3our liking'
ffor þough my selue be a vicious man
A more-ille tale 3it' I 3ou telle can
Which I am wont' to preche for to wynne
Now holde 3oure pees my tale I wol begynne

GROUP C. § 4. PARDONER'S TALE. Corpus MS.

IN fflaundres whilom was a companye /
Of' 3ong' folk' þat' haunteden folye
As Ryot' hasard stewes and tauernes
[1]Where as whyþ harpes lutes and gyternes[1] [[1]—[1] *In a different hand.*]
They daunce and pleye at dyse boþe day and nigħt'
And eeten also and drunken ouer al here migħt'
þorugħ which þey doon þe deueles sacrifise
Wiþinne þe deueles temple in cursed wyse
þe Sup*er*flues abhominable
here oþes ben so grete and dampna[b]le /
þat' it' is grisly for to here hem swere
Oure blessed lordes body they to-tere
hem þoughte Iewes rent/ him nougħt ynougħ
And ilke of' hem at' oþer synnes lowħ
And right' anon þenne come tomblisteres
ffetys and smal 3ong' fruytesteres /
Syngers with harpes bawdes wafereres
Suche ben verray þe deueles officers [leaf 197, back]
To kyndle and blowe þe fyr of' leccherie /
That' is annexed to glotonye /
The holy writ' take I to witnesse / ¶ Nolite inebriari vino in
That' leccherie is in wyn and drunkenesse ¶ quo est luxuria
Lo how þat' drunken loth vnkyndely
lay by his doughtres tuo vnwetyngly
So drunke he was he nyste what' he wrougħt'
And þ*er*fore sore repente him ougħte [*spurious*]
heroudes who so wole þe stories seche
þer may 3e lerne and by ensample teche [*spurious*]

Whan he of' wyn was replet' at' his feste
Right' at' his owen table ȝaf' his heste
To slen þe Baptist' Iohan ful gulteles
Senek' saiþ eek' goode wordes douteles
he seiþ he can no difference fynde
Bitwix a man þat/ is out of' his mynde
And a man þat' is drunkelewe
But' þat' wodnesse is fallen in a schrewe
Perseuereþ lenger þan doþ drunkenes
O glotenye ful of' cursednes
O cause ferst' of' oure confusioñ
O original of' oure dampnacioñ
Til crist' hadde brought' out' wiþ his blood agayn
lo how deere and schortly was to sayn
Aboute was þe cursed vilanye /
Corrupte was al þis world þurgh glotenye
Adam oure fader and his wyf' also
ffro paradys to labour and to wo
Were dryuen for þat' vice it' nys no drede
ffor whiles þat' adam fasted as I rede
He was in paradys and whan þat' he /
Ete of' þe fruyte defended on a tre
Anon he was out' cast' to woo and pleyne
O glotonye on þe wel oughte ous pleigne
O wiste a man how many maladyes
ffolweþ of' excesse and of' glotenyes [leaf 198]
he schulde be þe more mesurable
Of' his diete sittyng' at' þe table
Allas þe schorte þrote þe tendre mouþ
Makeþ þat' Est' and West' north and souþ
In erþe in aier in water men to swynke /
To gete a glotoun mete and drynke
Of' þis matiere o poule wel canst' þou entrete
Mete vnto wombe and wombe eek' vnto mete
Schal god discryuen boþe as poule saiþ
Allas a foul þing' is it' by my faiþ /

¶ Ieronimus *contra* Iouinianum quamdiu ieiunauit in paradiso fuit commedit et eiectus est statim duxit vxorem

To say þis word and fouler is þe dede ¶ Esca ve tibi & vent*er* escis d*eus* [?] a*urtem* & h*unc* i*n* ill*am* destre.
When men so drynkeþ of þe white and þe rede /
þat of his þrote he makeþ his pryue
þurgh þilke cursed sup*er*fluite
The apostel wepyng saiþ ful pitously
Ther walken many of which 3ou told haue I
I say it now wepyng wiþ pitous voys
Ther ben enemys of cristes croys
Of which þe ende is deþ þe wombe is here god
O wombe o holy o stynkynge kod
ffulfilde of dunge and of corupcioñ
At eyþer ende of þe foule is þe soun
How gret cost and labour is to fynde
þise cookes how þey scampe and streyne and grynde /
And turnen substaunce in-to accident
To fulfille al þy likerous talent
Out of þe harde bones knokken þay
þe mary for þay caste nought away
þat may go þurgh þe golet softe and swoote
Of spicerie of leues bark and roote
Schal ben his sause y-maad by delyte
To make him 3it a newer appetite
But certes he þat haunteþ suche delices
Is deed whiles þat he lyueþ in þe vices
A leccherous þing is wyn and drunkenes /
Is ful of stryuyng and of wrecchednes [leaf 198, back]
O drunken man disfigured is þi face
ffoul is þi breþ foul art þou to embrace
And þurgh þin drunken nose semeþ þi soun
As þough þou seydest ay Sampsoñ Sampsoñ
And 3it god woot Sampsoñ drank neuer no wyn
Thow fallest as it were a stiked swyn
Thyn tunge is lost and all*e* þin honeste cures
ffor drunkenes is v*er*ray sepultures
Of mannes wit and his discrecioñ
In whom þat drynke haþ dominacioñ

He can no counseil kepe it' is no drede
Now kẽpe 3ou fro þe white and fro þe rede
Namly fro þe white wyn of' lepe
þat' is to selle in ffischstret' or in Chepe /
This wyn of' Spayne crepeþ subtilly
In oþer wynes growyng' faste by
Of' which þer ryseþ such fumosite
þat' whan a man haþ drunken draughtes þre /
And weneþ þat' he be at' home in chepe
he is in spayne rigħt' at' þe toune of' lepe
Nought' at' þe Rochel ne at' Burdeux toun
And þenne wolen þey sayn Sampsoun Sampsoun
But' herkneþ lordinges o word I 3ou prey
That' all þe souerein actes dar I say
Of' victories in þe olde testament'
þat' þurgħ verray god þat' is omnipotent'
Were don in abstinence and in prayere
lokeþ þe bible and þere 3e may it leere
lokeþ attyla þe grete conquerour
Deyed in his sleepe wiþ schame and dishonour
Bledyng' ay at' his nose in drunkenes
A Capitayne schulde lyue in sobernes /
And ouer al þis avise 3ou rigħt' wel
What' was comaunded vnto lamuel
Nought' Samuel but' lamuel say I /
Redeþ þe bible and fyndeþ it' expressely [leaf 199]
Of' wyn 3euynge to hem þat' han iustice
Nomore of' þis for it' may wel suffice

AND now þat' I haue spoke of' glotonye
Now wole I defende 3ou hasardye
hasard is verray mooder of' lesynges
And of' disceipt' cursed forswerynges
Blaspheme of' crist' and mansleynges also
Of' batayle of' tyme and of' oþer mo
It' is repreff' and contrarie to honour
ffor to be holde a comune hasardour

And euer þe hyer he is of' astate
þe more he is y-halden desolate
If' þat' a prince vse hasardrye
In alle gouernaunce and alle polesye
he is as by comun opynyoñ
y-halde þe lasse in reputacioñ
[Stilbon that' was holde . a wise ambassatour
Was sent' in-to Corynthy . with ful grete honour] [Reg. 17 D xv, leaf 222]
ffro Calydonye to maken him alleaunce
And whan he cam him happede þis chaunce
þat' alle þe grettest' þat' were of' þis lande
Pleying' at' þe hasard he hem fande
ffor which as sone as þat' mighte be
he stal him home azein to his cuntre
And sayde þer I wol nought lese my name
I ne wol nought' take on me so gret' diffame
3ou to alleye to none hasardoures
Sendeþ oþerwise embassetoures
ffor by my trouþe me were leuer deye /
þan I to 3ou schulde hasardoures alleye /
ffor 3e þat' ben so glorious in honoures
Schal nou3t' aleye 3ou wiþ hasardoures
As by my wille ne as by my trete
þis wise Philosophre sayde to me
loke þou vse no pley of' dees in þin hous
loke eek' þat' to þe king' Demetrus
Sente him a payre of' dees of' gold in scorn
ffor he hadde vsed hasardye *þer* byforn [leaf 199, back]
ffor which he helde his glorie and his renoun
At' no value of' reputacioun
lordes mighten fynden oþer maner pley
honeste ynough to dryue þe day awey
NOw wol I speke of' oþes false and grete
A word or tuo as oþer bookes entrete
Gret' swerying' is a þing' abhominable
And fals swerynge is more reprouable

þe hihe god forbad sweryngꝫ atꝫ al
Witnesse atꝫ Matthew butꝫ in special
Ofꝫ sweryngꝫ saiþ þe holy Ieromie
þou schaltꝫ swere soþ þin oþes and noughtꝫ lye /
And swere in doome and eekꝫ in rightwisnesse
Butꝫ ydel sweryngꝫ is a cursednesse
Bihold and see þatꝫ in þe ferste table /
Ofꝫ heyhe goddes hestes honurable /
how þatꝫ þe secounde heste ofꝫ him is þis /
Take noughtꝫ my name in ydelnesse amys /
lo raþer he forbedeþ such sweryngꝫ
Or Omycyde or eny oþer cursed þingꝫ
I say as by ordre þus itꝫ standeþ
This knoweþ þatꝫ his hestes vnderstandeþ
how þatꝫ þe secounde heste ofꝫ god is þatꝫ
And forþermore I wol þe telle al platꝫ
þatꝫ vengeaunte schal nouȝtꝫ parte fro his hous
þatꝫ ofꝫ his othis is so outrageous
By goddes precious herte and his nayles
And by his blood þatꝫ is in hayles
Seuen is my chaunce and þin is fyue and þre /
By goddes armes ifꝫ þou falsly pleye me
þis dagger schal þurgh þin herte go
þis fruytꝫ comeþ ofꝫ þe bicched bones tuo
fforsweryngꝫ Ire falsnes homicyde
Now for þe loue ofꝫ cristꝫ þatꝫ for vs dyde
leueþ ȝoure oþes boþe grete and smale
ffor cristes sake and herkne to my tale [leaf 200]
þise ryetoures þre ofꝫ which I telle
longe er pryme ronge eny belle
Were sette hem in a tauerne for to drynke /
And as þey sate þey herde a belle clynke /
Byforn a corps was caryed to his graue
þatꝫ oon ofꝫ hem gan calle to his knaue /
Go betꝫ quoþ he and axe redyly
Whatꝫ corps is þis þatꝫ passeþ faste by /

And loke þat' þou reporte his name wel
Sire q*uod* þis boye it' nedeþ neuer a del
It' was me told er ȝe came here to oures
He was p*ar*de an old felawe of' ȝoures
Al sodeynly was he slayn to nigħt /
ffor-drunke as he sate vp his benche vprigħt'
Ther came a pryue þeef' men cleped deþ
þat' in his cuntre al þe poeple sleþ
And with his spere he smot' his herte a tuo
And went' his way wiþouten wordes mo
And maister er ȝe come in his p*re*sence /
he haþ a þousend slain þis pestilence /
Me þinkeþ it' were necessarie /
ffor to be war of' such an aduersarie /
Beþ redy for to mete him euermore /
þus taughte me my dame I say no more /
By seinte mary seyde þis tauernere
þe child saiþ soþ for he haþ slayn to ȝere
Hens ouer a myle wiþinne a gret' village
Boþe man and wo*m*man child and page
I trowe his habitacioñ be þere /
To ben auysed gret' wisedom it were /
Er þat' he dede a man dishonour
ȝe goddes armes q*uod* þis ryetour
Is it/ such p*er*il wiþ him for to mete
I schal him seeke by wey and eek' by strete
I make avow to goddes digne bones
Herkne felawes we þre ben alle ones [leaf 200, back]
let' eche of' vs halde vp his hand to oþ*er*
And eche of' vs bycome oþeres broþ*er*
And we woln slee þis false traytour deþ
He schal be slayn he þat' so many sleþ
By goddes dignite er it' be nigħt'
To-gidre haue þese þre here hertes higħt
To lyue and deye ilk' of' hem to oþer
As þougħ he were his owen sworne broþ*er*

And vp þey sterte al drunken in þis rage
And forþ þey gon toward þatt village
Of which þe tauerner haþ spoke byforn
And many a grisly oþ þenne haue þey sworn
And cristes blessed body þey torent
Deth schal be deed if þatt we may him hent/
Whan þey han goon nought fully a myle /
Right as þey wolde haue treden ouer a style
And olde and a pore man with hem mette
þis olde man ful mekely hem grette
And seyde þus now lordes god 3ou se
þe proudest of þese ryettoures þre
Answered agayn what carle wiþ harde grace
Why art þou al forwrapped saue þy face /
Why lyuest þou so longe in so gret age /
þis olde man gan loke in his visage /
And sayde þus for I can nought fynde /
A man þough þat I walked in-to ynde /
Neyþer in Cite ne in village
That wol chaunge his 3ouþe for myn age
And þerfore moot I haue myn age stille
As lange tyme as it is goddes wille /
Ne deþ allas nel nought haue my lyf
þus walke I lyk a resteles kaytyf
And on þe ground which is my moodres gate /
I knokke wiþ my staff erly and late
And saye leeue mooder lete me Inne
Lo how I wanse fleissch and blood and skyn [leaf 201]
Allas whan schullen myne bones ben at reste
Moder with 3ou wolde I chaunge my cheste
That in my chambre lange tyme haue be
3e for an here clout/ to wrappe me
But 3it to me sche wole nou3t do þat/ grace
ffor which ful hale and welked is my face
But sires to 3ou it nys no curtesye
To speken vntil an olde man vilenye

But' he trespace in word oþer elles. in dede
In holy wryt' 3e may 3oure self' wel rede /
A3eins an olde man hoor vpon his heede /
3e schullen aryse wherfore I 3iue 3ow rede
Ne doþ nou3t' to an olde man non harme now
No more þat' men dede to 3ow
In age if' þat' 3e so longe abyde
And god be wiþ 3ou wheþer 3e go or ryde
I mot' go þider þer as I haue to go
Nay olde cherl by god þou schalt' nou3t' so
Sayde þis olde hasardour anon
þou þartest' nought' so lightly by seint' Ion
þou spake right' now of' þilke traitour deþ
þat' in þis cuntre alle oure frendes sleeþ
haue heer my trouþe as þou art' his aspye /
Telle wher he is or þou schalt' abye
By god and by þe holy sacrament/
ffor soþly þou art' on of' his assent'
To slen vs 3onge folk' þou false þeef'
Now sires if' þat' it be to 3ou so leef'
To fynde deþ turne vp þis croked wey
ffor in þat' groue I lafte him by my fey
vnder a tre and þere he wole abyde
Ne for 3oure bost' he nyl him no þing' hyde
Se 3e þat' Oke right' þere 3e schuln him fynde
God saue 3ou þat' bou3t' a3ein mankynde.
And 3ou amende þus sayde þis olde man)
And euery of' þise ryetoures ran [leaf 201, back]
Til þey came to þe tree and þer þey founde
Of' floryns fyne of' gold y-coyned rounde
Wel neih a seuen buscheles as hem þought'
No lenger þenne after deþ þey sought'
But' eche of' hem so glad was of' þe sight'
ffor þat' þe floryns so faire ben and bright'
That' doun þey sette hem by þe *precious* horde
The worste of' hem he spak/ þe firste worde

Breþeren quod he take keepe whatˢ I say
My witte is gretˢ þoughˢ þatˢ I bourde and play
þis tresour haþ fortune to vs ȝiuen
In merþe and Iolyte oure lijfˢ to lyuen
And lightly as itˢ comeþ so wole we spende
Ey goddes *pre*cious dignite who wende
To day þatˢ we schulde haue so fair a grace
Butˢ mighte þis golde be caryed fro þis place
home to myn hous oþer elles vnto ȝoures
þanne mighte we seye þatˢ it/ were al oures /
þenne were we in heih felicite
butˢ trewely by day itˢ may nought be /
Men wolde say þatˢ we were þeues stronge
And for oure oughne tresour don vs honge
þis tresour moste y-karied be by nightˢ
As wysly and as sleighly as hitˢ mightˢ
Wherfore I rede letˢ loke amongˢ vs alle
Be drawe and let see wher þe cutte wol falle
he þatˢ haþ þe cutte wiþ herte blythe
Schal renne to toune and þat ful swythe
To brynge vs breed and wyn ful pryuyly
And tuo ofˢ ous schuln kepe ful subtilly
þis tresour wel and ifˢ he wol noughtˢ tarien
Whan þatˢ itˢ is nightˢ we woln þy tresour carien
By on assentˢ wher as vs luste best
þatˢ oon ofˢ hem broughte in his feste
And bad hem drawe and loke on whom it wol falle
And itˢ falle on þe ȝongeste ofˢ hem alle [leaf 202]
And forþ toward þe toun he wente anon
And also soone as he was y-gon
þatˢ on ofˢ hem spakˢ þus vnto þatˢ oþer
þou wostˢ wel þatˢ þou artˢ myn owen sworne broþer
Thyn *pro*phyte wol I telle þe anon
þou wostˢ wel þatˢ oure felawe is gon
And heere is gold and þatˢ ful gretˢ plente
Thatˢ itˢ schal departed be amongˢ vs þre

But' naþeles if' I can schape it/ so
þat' it' departed were among' vs tuo
had I nought' don a frendes turne to þe
þat' oþer answerde I not' how þat mighte be
I woot' wel þat' þe gold is oure tuo
What' schulde we seye what' schulde we do
Schal it' be counseil sayde þe firste schrewe /
And I schal telle in wordes fewe
What' we schuln doon and bringe it' wel aboute
I graunte q*uod* þat' oþer out of' doute
þat' by my trewþe I wol þe nouȝt' bewreye
Now quoþ þe firste þou wost' wel we be tweye
And tweyne of' vs schuln strenger ben þan oon
loke whenne he is sette and þanne anon
Aryse as þou woldest' wiþ him pleye
And I schal renne him þurgh þe sydes tweye
Whiles þat' þou struggelist' wiþ him in game
And wiþ þy dagger loke þou do þe same
And þenne schal al þis gold departed be
My deere freend bitwixe þe and me
þenne may we boþe oure lustes fulfille
And pleye atte dys right' at' oure owen wille
And þus accorded ben þese schrewes tweye
To sleen þe þridde as ȝe herde me seye
þis ȝongest' which þat' wente to þe toun
fful ofte in herte he rolleþ vp and doun
þe beaute of' þese floreynes newe and bright'
O lord quoþ he if' so were þat' I might' [leaf 202, back]
Al þis tresour wynne to my self' allone
þer nys no man þat' lyueþ vnder þe trone /
Of' god þat' scholde lyue as mery as I
And at' þe laste þe feend oure enemy
Putte in his þouȝt' þat' he schulde poysoñ beye
With which he mighte sleen his felawes tweye
ffor why þe feend' fand him in such lyuyng'
That' hadde leue him to sorwe brynge

ffor þis was vtterly his entent'
To slen hem boþe and neuer to repent
And forþ he goþ no lenger nolde he tarye
In-to þe toun vnto a potycarie /
And preyde him þat' he him wolde selle
Som poysoun þat' he mig̃ht' his rattes quelle
And eek' þer was a polkat' in his hawe
þat' as he sayde his Capons had y-slawe /
And sayde he wolde wreken him if' he mig̃ht'
Of' vermyn þat' distroyed him by nig̃ht'
þe apotykaries answerde þou schalt' haue
A þing' þat' als god my soule saue
In al þis world þer nys no creature
þat' eten or drunken haþ of' þis confecture
Nough̃t' but' þe mountaunce of' a corn of' whete
þat' he ne schal his ly3' anon forlete
3e sterue he schal and þat' in lasse while /
þenne þou wolt' gon a pace nough̃t' but' a myle
þis poysoun is so strong' and so vyolent'
þis cursed man haþ in his hand y-hent'
þis þoysoun in a box and seþenes he ran
In-to þe nexte strete vnto a man
And borwed him large botelles þre
And in þe tweyne þis poysoñ poured he
þe þridde he keped clene for his drynke
ffor al þe night' he schop him to swynke
In karying' of' þe golde out' of' þat' place
And whan þis ryetour wiþ sory grace [leaf 203]
had felled wiþ him his grete botelles þre
To his felawes a3ayn repayreþ he
What' nedeþ it' to sermone þer-of' more
ffor right' as þay hadde cast' his deþ afore
Right' so þey haue him slayn and þat' anon
And whenne þat' þis was don þen spak' þat' oon
Now let' vs drynke and sytte and make vs mery
And afterward we wolen his body bery

And aftirward it' happed hem *per* cas
To take þe botel þer-in þe poysoñ was
* And drank' and ȝaf' his felawe drynke also
ffor which anon þey storuen boþe tuo
But' certes I suppose þat' Auycenne
Wrot' neuer in no Canoun ne in no fenne
Mo wonder sorwes of' enpoysonyng'
Thus hadde þise wrecches tuo here endynge
Thus ended ben þis Omycides tuo
And eek' þe false enpoysonere also
O cursed synne ful of' cursednes
O traytours Omycyderes o wikkednes
O glotenye o luxurie O hasardye
þou blasphemer of' crist' wiþ vilenye
And oþes grete of' vsage and of' pryde
Allas mankynde how may it betyde
þerto þin creatour / which þat' þe wrought'
And wiþ his precious blood þe bought'
þou art' so fals and so vnkynde allas
Now goode men god forȝiue ȝoure trespas
And ware ȝou fro þe synne of' auarice /
Myn holy pardoun may ȝou alle warische
So þat' ȝe offre nobles or sterlinges
Oþer elles seluer spones broches and rynges /
Boweþ ȝoure hed vnder þis holy bulles
Comeþ vp ȝe wyues offreþ ȝoure wulles
ȝoure name I entre here in my rolle anon
In-to þe blisse of' heuen schul ȝe gon [leaf 203, back]
I ȝou assoille by myn heih powere
ȝe þat' woln offre as clene and eek' as cleere
As ȝe were born and sires lo þus I *pre*che
And Ihesu crist' þat' is oure soules leche
So graunte ȝou his pardoun to resceyue
ffor þat' is best' I wol ȝou nouȝt disceyue
But' sires o word forgat' I in my tale
I haue reliqes and pardoñ in my male

As faire as eny man in Engelond
Whiche were me y-ȝoue by þe popes hond
If eny of ȝou wole of deuocioñ
Offren and haue myn absolucioñ
Comeþ forþ anon and kneleþ doun heere
And ȝe schuln haue my pardoñ þat is deere
Oþer elles takeþ p*ar*doun as ȝe wende
Al newe and freissche at euery tounes ende
So þat ȝe offren alway newe and newe /
Nobles and pens which þat ben good and trewe
It is an honour to euerich þat is heere
þat ȝe may haue a suffisaunt p*ar*donere
To assoille ȝou in cuntre as I ryde
ffor auentures which þat may betyde
ffor p*er*aduenture þer may falle on or tuo
Doun of his hors and breke his necke a tuo
loke which a suerte it is to ȝou alle
þat I am in ȝour felaschipe y-falle
þat may assoille ȝou boþe more and lasse
Whan þat þe soule schal fro þe body passe /
I rede þat oure hooste schal begynne
ffor he is most envoluped in synne
Comeþ forþ sire Ost and offreþ first anon
And þou schalt kisse þe relikes euerychoon
ȝe for a grote vnbokel anon þy purs
Nay nay q*uod* he þenne haue I cristes curs
Let be q*uod* he it / schal nouȝt be so þeche
þou woldest make me kesse þin olde breche [leaf 204]
And swere it were a relyk of a seint
þough it were wiþ þyn foundement depeynt
But by þe Crosse which þat seint Eleyne fand
I wolde I hadde þine coyllons in my*n* hand
In stede of relikes oþer of seintuary
let cutte hem of I wol þe helpe hem cary
þey schuln be schryned in an hogges tord
þis p*ar*doner answerde nouȝt a word

So wroþ he was he nolde no word say
Now q*uod* oure Oostˡ I wil no lenger play
Wiþ þe ne with non o*þer* angry man
Butˡ rigħtˡ anon þe worþy knigħtˡ bygan
Whan þatˡ he saugħ þatˡ al þe poeple l[ough]
Nomore ofˡ þis for it is rightˡ ynougħ
Sire p*ar*doner be mery and glad ofˡ cheere
And ȝe sire Oste þatˡ ben to me so deere
I pray ȝou þatˡ ȝe kisse þe p*ar*doneere
And p*ar*doner I p*ray* þe þatˡ þou drawe þe neere
And as we dide letˡ vs laughe and pleye
Anon þey kisse and ryden forþ here weye ¶ Explicitˡ. fa*bul*a P*ar*don*arii*

GROUP B. (β. FRAGMENT III.)

§ 4. THE SHIPMAN'S TALE.

¶ Here bygynneþ þe schipmannes tale [on leaf 204]

A Marchaunt' whilom dwelled at' Seint' Denys Ca^m xvij^m.
That' riche was for which men heelde him wys
A wyf' he hadde of' excellent' beaute
And compynable and reuerent' was sche
Which is a þing' þat' causeþ more dispence
þen worþ is alle þe cheere and reuerence 1196
That' men haue doon at' festes and at' daunces
Suche salutaciouns and contynañces
Passeþ as doþ þe schadewe on a wal
But woo is him þat' paye moot' for al 1200
þe sely housband algates he moste paye
he moot' vs cloþe and vs arraye
As for his owen worschipe richely
In which aray we daunce Iolyly 1204
And if' þat' he nouȝt' may *per* aduenture [leaf 204, back]
Or elles luste no suche spenses endure /
But' þenkeþ it' is waste and y-loste /
Thenne moot' anoþ*er* payen for oure coste 1208
Or lene us golde and þat' is p*er*ilous
þis noble marchand held a noble hous
ffor which he hadde alday gret' repayre
ffor his largenesse and for his wyf' was fayre 1212
þat' wonder is but' herkeneþ to my tale
Amonges aH his gestes grete and smale /
þer was a monk' a fair man and a bolde
I trowe a þritty wynter he was olde / 1216
That' euer in oon was drawyng' to þe place
þis ȝonge monk' þat' was so fair of' face

Aqueynted was so wiþ þis goode man
Siþenes þat' here firste knowleche bygan
That' in his hous as ffamuler was he
As it is possible eny frend to be
And for as mekel as þe goode man
And eek' þis monk' of' which þat' I bygan
Were boþe tuo y-born in o village
The monk' him claymeþ as for cosynage
And he aʒein he saiþ nought' ones nay
Þut' was as glad þer of' as foul of' day
ffor to his herte it was a gret' plesaunce
Þus ben þay knitte wiþ eterne alliaunce /
And ilke of' hem gan oþer for to assure /
Of' broþerhode whiles þat' here lyf' may dure
ffre was daun Iohñ and namely of' dispense
As in þat' hous and ful of' diligence
To do plesaunce and also gret' costage /
he nought' forgat' to ʒiue þe leste page /
In al þat' hous but' after here degre
He ʒaf' þe lord and seþins al his meyne /
Whan þat' he came som maner honest' þing'
ffor which þey were al glad of' his comyng'
As foul is fayn whan sonne vp ariseþ [leaf 205]
Namore of' þis as now for it' suffiseþ
But' so bifeH þis marchaund vpon a day
Schop him to make redy his array
Toward þe toun of' Bruges for to fare
To byen þere a porcioun of' ware
ffor which he haþ to Parys sent' anon)
A messanger and preyed haþ doun Ion
That' he schulde come to seint' Denys and pleye
Wiþ him and with his wyf' a day or tweye
Or he to Bruges wente in aH wyse
This noble monk' of' which I ʒou deuyse
haþ of' his abbot' as him lust' licence
By cause he was a man of' heih prudence

And eek' an officer out' for to ryde
To see here graunges and here bernes wyde
And vnto seynt' Denys he comeþ anon
Who was so welcome as my lord daun Ioħn̄
Oure deere cosyn ful of' curtesye
Wiþ him brought' he a Iobbe of' maluesye
And eek' anoþer ful of' good v*er*nage
And volatille as ay was his vsage
And þus I lete hem ete and drynke and pleye
This marchand and þis monk' a day or tweye /
The þridde day þis marchand vp ariseþ
And on his needes sadly him aviseþ
And vp in to his countourhous goþ he /
To rekne wiþ himselue wel may be
Of' þilke ȝeer how þat' it' with him stood
And how þat' he despended hadde his good
And if' þat' he encresed were or non
his bokes and his bagges many oon
he leyþ bifore him on his countyng' bord
ffull riche was his tresour and his hoord
ffor which ful faste his counterhous dore he schette
And eek' he nolde noman schulde him lette
Of' his acountes for þe mene tyme [leaf 205, back]
And þus he sitte til it' was passed p*ri*me
Daun Ioħn was rysen in þe morne also /
And in þe gardyn walkeþ to and fro
And haþ his þinges sayde deuoutely
þis goode wyf' cam walkynge pryuely
In to þe gardyn þer he walkeþ softe
And him salueth as sche haþ don ofte
A mayden childe came in hire companye
Which at hire luste may gouerne and gye
ffor ȝit vnder þe ȝerde was þe mayde
O deere Cosyn myn daun Ioħn sche sayde /
What' eyleþ ȝou so raþe to aryse
Nece q*uod* he it' aughte ynough̄ suffise

ffyue houres for to slepen on a nyght
But it were for an olde palled knight
As ben þese wedded men þat lye and dare
As in a forme sitte alway an hare
Were al forstraught wiþ houndes grete and smale
But deere neece why be ȝe so pale /
I trowe certes þat oure goode man
haþ ȝou laboured seþenes þe night bygan
þat ȝou were neede to resten hastily
And wiþ þat word he lough ful meryly
And of his owne þought he wax al reed
This fayre wyf gan to schake hire heed
And sayde þus ȝe god wot al *quod* sche
Nay cosyn myn it stant nouȝt so wiþ me /
ffor by þat god þat ȝaff/ me soule and lyf
In aH þe rewme of ffraunce is þer no wyf
That lasse lust haþ to þat sory pley
ffor I may synge allas and welawey
þat I was born but to no wight *quod* sche
Dar I nouȝt telle how it stant wiþ me
Wherfore I þenke out of þis lond to wende
Or elles of myself to make an ende /
So ful am I of drede and of care [leaf 206]
This monk bygan vpon þis wyf to stare
And sayde allas my neece god it forbede
That ȝe for eny sorwe or ony drede
ffordo ȝoure self but telleþ forþ ȝoure greef
*Per*aduenture I may in ȝour mescheef
Counseile or helpe and *þer*fore telleþ me
AH ȝoure annoye for it schal be secre
ffor on my portos I make an oth
þat neuer in my lijf for leef ne loþ
Ne schal I of no counseil ȝou bewreye
The same aȝein to ȝou *quod* sche I seye
By god and by þis portos I swere
þey men wolde me al to peeces tere

Ne schal I neuer for to go in to helle
Bewreye a word of þing þat ȝe me telle /
Nought for no cosynage ne alliaunce
But verreily for loue and affiaunce
Thus ben þey swore and her-vpon y-kiste
And ilk of hem tolde oþer what hem liste
Cosyn q*uod* sche if I hadde a space
As I haue non and namely in þis place
þanne wolde I telle a legende of my lyf
What I haue suffred sethens I was a wyf
Wiþ my*n* housband and þeigh he be ȝour cosyn
Nay q*uod* þis monk by god and by seint Martyn
he nys no more cosyn vnto me
þan is þis leef þat hangeþ on þe tre
I clepe him so by seint Denys in ff*r*aunce
To haue þe more cause of acqueyntaunce
Of ȝou which I haue loued specially
Abouen all wo*m*men sikerly
This were ynough on my professioñ
Telleþ ȝoure greef lest þat he come a-doun
And hasteþ ȝou and goþ ȝoure wey anon
My deere loue q*uod* sche O daun Ioħn
ful leef me were þis counseil to hyde [leaf 206, back]
But out it mot it may no lenger abyde
myn housbond is to me þe worste man
þat euer was siþenes þe world bygan
But siþenes I am a wyf it sit nouȝt me
To telle no wight of oure pryuyte
Neyþer a bedde ne in non o*þer* place
God schilde I scholde telle it for his *grace*
A wyf ne schal nat seyn of hire housband
But all honour' as I can vnderstande
Saue vnto ȝou þus moche telle I schal
As help me god he nys nouȝt worþ at al
In no degre þe value of a flye
But ȝit me greueþ most his nyggardye

And wel ȝe woot' þat' wo*m*men naturelly
Desyren þinges seuen as wel as I
þey wolden þat' here housbandes scholde be
hardy and wys riche and þ*er*-to fre
And buxum to his wyf' and freissch a bedde
But' by þat' ilke lord þat' for vs bledde
ffor his honour my selue to arraye
A sonday next' I moste paye
An hundred ffrankes or elles am I lorn
Ȝet' were me leuer þat' I were vnborn
þenne me were don a sclaunder or vilenye
And if' myn housbande eeke might aspye
I nere but' lost' and þ*er*fore I ȝou preye
lene me þis so*m*me and elles mot' I deye
Daun Iohn I say lene me þese hundred frankes
Par de I wol not' fayle þe my þankes
If' þat' ȝou luste to do þat' I ȝou pray
ffor at' a certein day I wole ȝou pay
And do to ȝou what' plesaunce and seruise
That' I may do right' as ȝou lust' deuyse
And but' I do god take on me vengaunce
As foule as hadde genyloñ of ffr*a*unce
This gentil monk' answerde in þis manere [leaf 207]
Now trewely myn owen lady deere
I haue q*uod* he on ȝou so gret' a rouþe
That' I ȝou swere and plight̄e ȝou my trouþe
That' whan ȝoure housbonde is to fflaundres fare
I wol delyuer ȝou out' of' þis worldes care /
ffor I wol bringen ȝou an hundred frankes
And wiþ þat' he caught' hir by þe schankes
And hire enbraced harde and kissed ofte
Goþ now ȝoure weye q*uod* he al stille and softe
And let' vs dyne as sone as euer ȝe may
ffor by my chilyndre it' is p*ri*me of' þe day
Goþ now and beþ as trewe as I schal be /
Now elles god forbede sire q*uod* sche

And forþ sche goþ as gelous as a pye
And bad þe cokes þat' þey schulde hem hye
So þat' men mighte dyne and þat anon
vp to hir housbonde is þis wyf' y-gon
And knokkeþ at his countour' boldely
Quy la q*uod* he peter it' am I
Quoþ sche what' how longe wol ȝe faste /
how longe tyme wol ȝe rekne and caste
ȝoure so*m*mes ȝoure bokes and ȝoure þinges
þe deuyl haue part' on aH suche rekenynges
ȝe han ynoughh parde of' goddes sonde
Come doun to day and lete ȝoure bagge stonde
Ne be ȝe noughht' aschamed þat' Daun Iohn
Schal fastyng' al þis day elenge gon
What' lete vs heere masse go we dyne
Wyf' q*uod* þis man ful lytel canstow dyuyne
The curious busynesse þat' we haue
ffor of' vs chapmen so god me saue
And by þat' lord þat' called is seint' yue
Skarsly amonges twelue tweye schuln þriue
Continuelly lastyng' vnto oure age
We may wel make chere and good visage
And dryue forþ þe world as it may be [leaf 207, back]
And kepen oure estate in priuite
Til we be deed or elles þat' we pleye
A pylgrymage or gon out' of' þe weye
And þ*er*fore haue I gret' necessite
vpon þis queynte worlde to auyse me
ffor euermore we mote stande in drede
Of' happe and fortune in oure chapmanhede
To fflaundres wol I go to morne at' day
And come aȝein as sone as euer I may
ffor which my deere wyff' I þe beseke
As be to eu*er*y wighht' buxom and meke
And for to kepe oure good be curious
And honestly gouerne wel oure hous

þou hast' ynough in eu*er*y maner wyse
That' to a thrifty housbonde may suffise
The lakkeþ non array ne no vitayle
Of' Siluer in þi purs þou mayst' nou3t' fayle
And wiþ þat' word his countour dore he schette
And doun he goþ no lenger nolde he lette
And hastyly a masse was þer sayde
And speedly þe tables were layde
And to þe dyner faste þey hem speede
And richely þis monk' þe Chapman fedde
And after dyner daun Iohn soburly
This Chapman took' a part' al pryuyly
he seyde him þus cosyn it' standeþ so
þat' wel I see to Bruges wolle 3e go
God and seint' austyn spede 3ou and gyde
I pray 3ou Cosyn wysly þat' 3e ryde
Gouerneþ 3ou also of' 3oure dyete
And temp*er*ally and namely in þis hete
Bytwixe vs tuo needeþ no straunge fare
ffare wel cosyn god schilde 3ou fro care
If' eny þing' þer be by' day or by night'
If' it' ligge in my power and my might'
That' 3e me wol comaunde in eny wyse [leaf 208]
It' schal be doon right' as 3e wil deuyse
O þing' er þat' 3e gon if' þat' it' may be
I wolde preye 3ou for þe loue of' me
An hundred frankes for a wyke or tweye
ffor certeyn bestes þat' I moste beye
To store with a place þat' is owres
God helpe me I wolde þat' it' were 3owres
I schal nought' fayle suerly of' my day
Nought' for a þousand frankes a myle way
But' lete þis þing' be secre I 3ou preye
3e schulle be payed wher þat' I lyue or deye
And fare now wel myn owen cosyn dere
Graunt' m*er*cy of' 3oure cost' and of' 3oure chere

This noble marchaunt' gentilly anon
Answerde and sayde O Cosyn daun Iohn
Now sikerly þis is a smal requeste
My gold is 3oures whan þat' euer 3ou leste
And nought' oonly my gold but' my chaffare
Tak' what' 3ou leste god schilde þat' 3e spare
But' o þing' is 3e knowe it wel ynough
Of' chapmen þat here monee is here plough
We may creaunce whiles we haue a name /
But' goldles for to be it' is no game
Pay it' a3ein whan it' liþ in 3our ese
After my might' ful fayn wolde I 3ou plese
þise hundred frankes he fette forþ anon
And pryuyly he took' hit' to daun Iohn
No wight' in al þis world wist of' þis lone
Sauyng' þis marchaunt' and daun Iohn allone
þey dranken and romed out' to pleye
Til þat' daun Iohn rydeþ to his abbeye
þe morne came and forþ þis marchaunt' rydeþ
To fflaundres ward his prentys wel him gydeþ
Til he cam in to Bruges meryly
Now goþ þis marchaunt' faste and bysyly
Aboute his neede and byeþ and creauncеþ [leaf 208, back]
he neyþer pleyeþ at' þe dys ne dauncеþ
But' as a marchand schortly for to telle
he leet' his wyf' and þer I lete him dwelle
þe sonday next' þe marchaunt' was agon
To seint' Denys I-comen is Daun Iohn
Wiþ croune and berde freissch and newe schaue
In al þe hous þer nas so lite a knaue
Ne no wight' elles þat' he nas fayn
ffor þat' my lord doun Iohn was come agayn
And schortly to here poynt' for to gon
þis fayre wyf' acordeþ to daun Iohn
And for þis hundred ffrankes he schulde al night'
haue hire in his armes bolt' vpright'

And þis acorde p*ar*fourmed was in dede
In myrþe al nigħt' / a busy lyf' þey lede
Til it' was day þat' daun Ioħn went' his way
And bade þe meyne far wel haue good day
ffor non of' hem ne no wight' in þe toun
haþ of' daun Ioħn rigħt' non suspecioun
and forþ he rydeþ home to his abbay
Or wher him luste no more of' him I say
This marchaunt' whan þat' ended was þe ffayre
To seint' Denys he gan for to repayre
And wiþ his wyf' he makeþ feste and chere
And telleþ hire þat' chaffare is so deere
þat' needes moste he make a Cheuesaunce
ffor he was bounden in a reconysaunce
To paye xx þousand scheldes anon
ffor which þis marchaunt' is y-wont' to gon
To borwe of' certein frendes þat' he hadde
A certeyn frankes and some wiþ him he ladde
And whan þat' he was come in to þe toun
ffor gret' chierte and gret/ affeccioun
vnto daun Ioħn he ferst' him goþ to pleye
Nought' for to borwe of' him no moneye
But' for to wite and se of' his welfare [leaf 209]
And for to tellen him of' his chaffare
As frendes don when þey ben mette in feere
Daun Ioħn him makeþ feste and mery cheere
And he him tolde aȝein ful specially
how he hadde brought' ful wel and g*r*aciously
þanked be god al hool his marchaundise
Saue þat' he moste in aħ maner wyse
Maken a cheuysance as for his beste
And þenne he schulde be in ioye and reste
Daun Ioħn answerde certes I am fayn
þat' ȝe in hele be come home agayn
And if' þat' I were riche as haue I blisse
Of' twenty þousand scheldes scholde ȝe nouȝt' misse

ffor ȝe so kyndely þis oþer day
Lente me golde as I can and may
I þanke ȝou by god and by seint Iame
But naþeles I took vnto oure dame
ȝoure wyf at home þe same gold aȝain
vpon ȝoure benche sche wot it wel certain
By certein toknes þat I can hire telle /
Now by ȝoure leue I may no lenger dwelle
Oure abbot wol out of þis toun anon
And in his companye mot I gon
Gret wel oure dame myn owen nece swete
And fare wel dere cosyn til we mete
This marchaunt wiþ þat was ful war and wys
Creaunsed haþ and eek payed in Parys
To certein lumbardes redy in here hand
þis somme of gold and gat of hem þe band
And home he goþ mery as popyngay
ffor wel he knew he stood in such aray
þat needes moste he wynne in such a viage
A þousend frankes abouen al his costage
his wyf ful redy mette him atte gate
As sche was wont of old vsage algate
And al þat night in mirþe þey besette / [leaf 209, back]
ffor he was riche and clerly out of dette
Whan it was day þis marchant gan enbrace /
his wyf al newe and kissed hire on hire face
And vp he goþ and makeþ it wonder tough
No more q*uod* sche by god ȝe haue ynough
And wantounly aȝein wiþ him sche pleyde
Tille atte laste þat þis marchant seyde
By god q*uod* he I am a litel wroþ
Wiþ ȝou my wyf þough it be me loth
And wote ȝe why by god as þat I gesse
ffor ye haue made a maner straungenesse
Bytwixen me and my cosyn daun Iohn
ȝe schulde haue warned me er I hadde gon

þat' he hadde ȝou an hundred frankes payed
By redy tokne and he him held yuel payed
ffor þat' I to him spak' of' cheuysaunce
Me semed so as by his contynaunce
But' naþeles by god and heuen king'
I þoughte nought' to axe of' him) no þing'
I pray þe wyf' ne do no more so
Telle me alway er þat' I fro þe go
If' eny dettour haþ in myn absence
I-payed þe leste þurgh þin necligence
I might' him axe a þing' þat' he haþ payed
þis was nas nough affered ne affrayed
But' boldely sche seyde and þat' anon
Mary I diffye þat' false monk' daun Iohn
I kepe nought' of' his tokenes neuer a deel
he tok' me certein gold þis wot' I wel
What' euele þedam on his monkes snowte /
ffor god it' wot' I wende wiþouten doute /
þat' he hadde ȝoue it' me by cause of' ȝou
To do þer wiþ myn honour and my prow
ffor cosynage and eek' for bele chere
þat' he haþ had fulofte tyme heere[1]
But' seþins I see I stonde in such disioynt'
I wol answere ȝou schortly to þis poynt'
Ȝe haue mo slakker dettours þen am I
ffor I wol paye ȝow wel and redily
ffro day to day and if' so be I fayle
I am ȝour wyf' score it' vpon my tayle
And I schal paye as sone as euer I may
ffor by my trouþe I haue on myn array
And nought' on waste bestowed euery del
And for I haue bestowed it' so wel
To ȝoure honour for goddes sake I say
As be nought' wroþ but' lete vs laughe and play
Ȝe schuln my ioly body haue to wedde /
By god I nyl nought' paye ȝou but' a bedde

[1 *Skip a leaf which is headed* Thopas.]
[leaf 211]

fforȝiue it' me myn owen spouse deere /
Turne hiderward and makeþ bettre cheere
This marchaunt' seyh þer was no remedye
And for to chyde it' nere but' folye /
Seþins þat' þe þing' may nought' amended be
Now wyf' he sayde and I forȝiue it' þe
But' by þin lyf' ne be no more so large
kepe bet' my good þis ȝiue I þe in charge /
þus endeþ now my tale and god vs sende
Toylyng'ynough vnto oure lyues ende ¶ Explicit' 1624

Here endeþ þe schipmannes tale

WEl seyde by corpus d*ominus*
Now lange mote þou sayle by þē coste
Sire gentil mayster gentil marynere /
God ȝiue þe monkꝫ a þousand lastꝫ quade ȝere / 1628
A ha felawes beþ war ofꝫ such a Iape /
þe monkꝫ putte in þe mannes hood an ape /
And in his wyues eekꝫ by seintꝫ austyn
Draweþ no monkes more in to ȝoure In 1632
Butꝫ now passe ouer and letꝫ vs seke aboute
Who schal now telle ferstꝫ ofꝫ al þis route
Anoþer tale and wiþ þatꝫ word he sayde
As curteysly as itꝫ hadde ben a mayde [leaf 211, back]
My lady prioresse by ȝour leue
So þatꝫ I wiste I schulde ȝou noughtꝫ greue /
I wolde deme þatꝫ ȝe telle schulde
A tale nextꝫ ifꝫ so were þatꝫ ȝe wolde 1640
Now wole ȝe fouche saufꝫ my lady deere /
Gladly quoþ sche and sayde in þis manere

[*No gaps between the stanzas.*]

, Here begynneth þe tale of Alma redemptoris
þe p*r*ioresses Tale. ¶ P*r*olog*e*

¶ Do*m*ine do*min*us noster

O lord oure lord þin name how merueilous
Is in þis large word y-spredde q*uod* she
ffor nought only þyn laud precious
P*ar*fourned is by men of dignite
But by þe mouth of children þin bounte
Parformed is for on oure brest soukynge
Som tyme schewen þey þin heryynge

¶ Wherfore in laude as I can best or may
Of þe and of þe white lyly flour
Which þat þe bar and is a mayde alwey
To telle a story I wol don my labour
Nought þat I may encrece hire honour
ffor sche hireself is honour and þe*r*to roote /
Of bounte next hire sone of soules boote

¶ O mooder mayde O mayde moder fre
O busch vnbrent brennyng in moyses sight
That rauyscheþ doun fro þe deytele
þurgh þin humbles þe gost þat in þe alight
Of whos vertu whan he in þin herte alight
Conceyued was þe fadres sapience
Help me to telle it in þin reuerence

¶ Lady þin bounte and þin magnificence
þin vertu and þin gret humilite
Ther may no tonge expresse in no science
ffor som tyme lady er men preye to þe
þou gost biforn and þin benignite
And getest vs to light þurgh þin prayere
To gyden vs vnto þin sone so clere [leaf 212]

My connyng' is to wayk' o blisful queene
ffor to declare þin grete worþinesse
That' I ne may þe weighte nough't' susteene /
But' as a childe of' xij monthe elde or lesse
That' can vnneþes any word expresse /
Right' so fare I and þerfore I 3ou preye
Gydeþ my song' þat' I schal of' 3ou seye

[*THE TALE.*]

Ther was in a cite in a gret' cite
Amonges cristen folk' and Iewerye
Susteyned by a lord of' þat' cuntre
ffor foule vsure and lucre of' vilanye
hatful to crist' and to his companye
And þurgh þe strete men mighte ryde or wende
ffor it' was fre and open at' euery ende

A lytel scole of' cristen folk' þer stood
Doun at' þe furþer ende in which þer were
Children an heepe y-come of' cristes blood
That' lered in þat' scole 3ere by 3eere
Such maner doctrine as men vsed þere
This is to say to syngen and to rede
As smale children don in here childhede

Among' þis children was a wydewes sone
A litel clergoun vij 3er of' age
That' day by day to scole was his wone /
And eek' also wher he saugh the ymage /
Of' cristes mooder hadde he in vsage
As him was taught' to knele a doun and seye
his aue marie as he goþ by þe weye

Thus haþ þis wydewe hire litel child y-tauȝt
Oure blisful lady cristes mooder deere /
To worschipe ay and he forgat it nought
ffor sely child wol alday sone lere
But ay whan I remembre me on þis matere
Seynt Nicholas stant euer in my presence
ffor he so ȝonge to crist dede reuerence

¶ This child his litel book lernynge [leaf 212, back]
As he sat in þe scole at his primere
he alma redemptoris herde synge /
As children lerned here antiphoner
And as he durste he drough him ner and neer
And herkned ay þe wordes and þe noote /
Til he þe firste vers couþe al by roote /

Nouȝt wiste he what þe latyn was to say
ffor he so ȝong and tender was of age /
But on a day his felawe gan he preye
To expounen him þis song in his langage /
Or tellen him why þis song was in vsage /
This preyde he him to construe and declare /
fful ofte tyme vpon his knees bare /

his felawe which þat elder was þan he
Answerde him þus þis song I haue herd say
Was maked of oure blisful lady fre
hire to salue and eeke hire for to pray
To ben oure helpe and socour whan we deye
I can no more expounde in þis matiere
I lerne song I can but smale gramere /

¶ And is þis song ymade in reuerence
Of cristes mooder sayde þis Innocent
Now certes I wol don my diligence
To konne it er Cristemas be went

þough þat I for my prymer schal be schent
And schal [be] beten þries in an houre
I wol it konne oure lady to honoure 1733

¶ his felawe taught him homward pryuyly
ffro day to day til he couþe it by roote
And þenne he sang it wel and boldely
ffro word to word acordyng to þe note / 1737
þries on a day it passeþ þurgh his þrote /
To scoleward and homward whan he went
On cristes moder sette was his entent/ 1740

As I haue sayde þurghout þe Iewerie
This litel childe as he came to and fro [leaf 213]
ffull meryly þen wolde he synge and crye /
On alma redemptoris euermo 1744
The swetnes haþ his herte perced so
Of cristes mooder þat to hure to preye
He can nought stynte of syngynge by þe weye / 1747

¶ Oure firste foo þe serpent Sathanas
That haþ in Iewes his waspes neste
vp swalle and sayde O Ebrayke poeple allas /
Is þis a þing to 3ou þat is honeste / 1751
þat suche a boy schal walken as him leste /
In 3oure despite and syngen of such sentence
Which is a3ein oure lawes reuerence / 1754

¶ ffro þennes forth þe Iewes han conspired
This Innocent out of þis world to chace
In homicidie þer-to han þey hyred
þat in an aley had a pryue place 1758
And as þe childe gan forby for to pace
þis cursed Iew him hente and heeld faste
And cutte his þrote and in a putte him caste / 1761

¶ I say þat in a wardrobe þey him drewe /
Wher as þise Iewes purgen entraille
O' cursed folk of heroudes al newe /
What may 3oure euyl entent 3ou auayle /
Mordre wole out certain it wol nought fayle
And namely þere honour of god schulde sprede
þe blood out cryeþ on 3our cursed dede

¶ O martyr sonded to virginite
Now maystow syngen folwyng euer in oon
The white lambe celestial quod he /
Of which þe grete eu*au*ngelist seint Ioħn
In Pathmos wrot which seiþ þey þat gon
Byforn þis lambe and synge a song al newe
þat neuer fleisschly wo*m*men þey knewe

¶ þis pore wydewe wayteþ al þat nigħt
After þis litel childe but hom cam he nou3t
ffor whom as sone as it was dayes ligħt [leaf 213, back]
Wiþ face pale for drede and busy þougħt
Sche haþ at scole and elles wher him sougħt
Til fynally sche gan so fer aspye
þat he was seyn last in þe Iewerye

¶ With moodres pyte in hire brest enclosed
Sche goþ as þougħ sche were half out of mynde /
To euery place where sche haþ supposed
By lyklyhede hire childe for to fynde
And euer on cristes moder meke and kynde
Sche cryed and at þe laste þus sche wrougħt
Among þe cursed Iewes sche him sougħt

Sche freyneþ and sche preyeþ pitously
To euery Iewe þat dwelt in þilke place
To telle hire if hire child went hem by
They sayden nay but iħesus[1] of his grace [1 MS iħc]

ȝaf in hire þoughte wiþ-in a litel space
þat in þat place after hire sone sche cryede
þer he was caste in a putte besyde

¶ O grete lord þat parformed þin laude
By mouþ of Innocence lo here þy mighte
This gemme of chastite þis Emeraude
And eek of martirdome þe ruby brighte
þer he wiþ þrote y-korue lay vpright
he alma redemptoris gan to synge
So loude þat al þe place gan to rynge

¶ The cristen folk þat þurgh þe strete went
In comen for to wondren on þis þinge
And hastely þey for þe prouost sent
he came anon wiþouten eny taryynge
And herieþ crist þat is of heuen kinge
And eek his mooder honour of mankynde
And after þat þe Iewes let he bynde

This childe wiþ pitous lamentacioñ
vp taken syngynge his songe alway
And with honour and gret processioñ /
They carien him to þe next abbay [leaf 214]
his moder swownynge by þe bere lay
vnneþes mighte þe poeple þat was þere
This newe rachel bringe fro his bere

Wiþ torment and with schameful deþ ilkon
This prouost doþ þis Iewes for to sterue
That of þis moerdre wiste and þat anon
he nolde non such cursednesse obserue /
Euel schal haue þat euel wol deserue
þerfore with wilde hors he dede him drawe
And after þat he hynge him by þe lawe

¶ Vpon þis beere ay liþ þis Innocentꝰ
Biforn þe chiefꝰ auter whiles masse lastꝰ
And after þatꝰ þe abbotꝰ/ wiþ his couent
hadde spedde him for to burye him als fast
And whan þey halywater on him castꝰ
ȝitꝰ spakꝰ þe child when spreyntꝰ was þe holy water
And sangꝰ O alma redemptoris mater

¶ This abbotꝰ which þatꝰ was an holy man
As monkes ben or elles oughten to [1] be [1 ? to *later*]
This ȝonge childe to coniure he bigan
And sayde O deere childe I hailse þe
By vertu ofꝰ þe holy trinite
Telle me whatꝰ is þy cause for to synge
Siþenes þatꝰ þy þrote is kutte at my semynge

¶ My þrote is cutte vnto my nekke bon
Sayde þis childe and as by way ofꝰ kynde
I schulde haue deyed ȝe longꝰ tyme agon
Butꝰ ihesu cristꝰ as ȝe in bookes fynde
Wol þatꝰ his glorie laste and be in mynde
And for þe worschipe ofꝰ his moder deere /
ȝetꝰ may I synge O alma lowde and cleere

¶ This welle ofꝰ mercy crystes mooder swete
I loued alwey as after my konnyngꝰ
And whan þatꝰ I my lyffꝰ schulde lete
To me sche cam and bad me for to synge
This anteme verraily in my mynde deynge [leaf 214, back]
as ȝe haue herd and when þatꝰ I hadde songe
Me þoughtꝰ sche leyde a greyn vpon my tonge /

¶ Wherfore I synge and synge mootꝰ certein
In honour ofꝰ þe blisful martir fre
Til ofꝰ my tonge ofꝰ taken is þe greyn
And after þatꝰ sayde sche þus to me

My litel childe now wol I fecche þe
Whan þat' þy grein is fro þy tonge y-take
Be nought' a-gast' I wol þe nought' forsake

¶ þis holy monk' þis abbot' him mene I
his tunge out' caught' / and took' awey þe greyn
And he 3af' up þe gost' ful softely
And when þis abbot / hadde þis wonder seyn
his salte teeres stryked doun as reyn
And gruff' he fell al plat' vnto þe grounde
And stille he lay as he hadde ben y-bounde /

¶ þe couent' eek' lay vppon þe pauyment'
Wepyng' and herying' cristes moder deere
And after þat' þay ryse and for ben went'
And toke awey þis martir fro his bere /
And in a tombe of' marbiH stones clere
Enclosen þey his litel body swete
Ther he is now god leue vs for to mete

¶ O 3onge hewe of' lincolle slayn also
Wiþ cursed Iewes as it' is notable
ffor it' nys but' a litel while ago
Preye eek' for vs we synful folk' vnstable
That' of' his mercy god so merciable
On vs his grete mercy multiplye
ffor reuerence of' his mooder marie AmeN ¶ Explicit' //

GROUP B. § 7. PRIORESS-THOPAS LINK. Corpus MS.

Whan seyde was þis tale eu*er*y man
As sober was þat' wonder was to se
Til þat' owre Oste Iape þo bygan
And þenne at' erst' he loked vpon me ¶ Chaucere
And sayde þus what' man art' þou q*uo*d he
Thou lokest' as þou woldest' fynde an hare / [leaf 215]
ffor euer vpon þe ground I se þe stare 1887

Approche ner and loke meryly
Now ware ȝou sires and let' þis man han place
he in þe waste is schapen as wel as I
This were a popet' in armes to embrace 1891
ffor any wo*m*man smal and fair of' face
he semeþ eluyssch̄ by his contynaunce
ffor vnto no wigh̄t' doþ he dalyaunce 1894

Say now somwhat' seþins oþer folk' han sayd
Telle vs a tale of' merþe and þat' anon
Oste q*uod* I ne be nough̄t' yuel a-payde
ffor oþer tale certes can I non 1898
But' of' a Ryme I lerned longe agon
ȝe þat' is good q*uod* he schuln we here
Som deynte þing' me þinkeþ by his cheere. 1901

[*No gaps between the stanzas in the MS.*]

¶ Here bygynneth þe tale of Chaucer of sire Thopas
Ca^m xix^m

[*Fytte I.*]

LEsteneþ lordes in good entent
And I wol telle verrament
Of miracle and solace
Al of a knight was fayr and gent
In bataille and in tornament
His name was sire Thopace

I-born he was in ferre cuntre
In fflaundres al beȝonde þe se
At poperyng in þe place
his fader was a man ful fre
And lord he was of þat contre
As it was goddes grace

Sire Thopas was a doughty swayn
Whyt was his face as Payndemayn
his lyppes reed as Rose
his robe is like Scarlet en grayn
And I ȝou telle in good certayn
he hadde a semely nose

his berd his heer was lik saffroun
That to his gurdel straught a-doun [leaf 215, back]
his schoon of Cordewayne /
Of Bruges were his hosen broun
his robe was of Ciclatoun
That coste many a Iayne

he coupe hunte at' wylde deer
And Ryde an haukynge by þe ryuer
Wiþ gray goshauk' on honde
Ther to he was a good archer
Of' wrastlyng' was þer non his peer
Ther any man schulde stonde

fful many a mayde brigħt' in bour
They mourne for him *par*amour
When þey were bet' to slepe
But' he was chaste and no lecchour
And swete as is þe bremble flour
þat' bereþ þe rede hepe

¶ And so byfeħ vpon a day
ffor soþe as I ȝou telle may
Sire Thopas wolde out' ryde
he worþe vpon his steede gray
And in his hande a launcegay
A long' swerd by his syde

he prikeþ þurgħ a fair forest'
Ther Inne is many a wilde beest'
Ȝe boþe bucke and hare
And as he prikeþ northħ and Est'
I telle ȝou him hadde almest'
Betydde a sory care

Ther springen herbes grete and smale
The lycoris and þe Setuale
And many a clowe Gylofre
And notemuges to put' in ale
Whe þer it' be moyst' or stale
Or for to leye in Coffre

The briddes syngen it is nou3t nay
The sperhauk and þe popyngay [leaf 216]
That Ioye it was to heere / 1958
The þrostilkok made eek his lay
The woode dowfe vpon þe spray
Sche sang ful loude and cleere 1961

Sire Thopas feH in loue longyng
And whan he herde þe þrustel syng
And priked as he were wood 1964
his faire steede in his prikynge
So swette þat men migHt him wrynge
his sydes were al blood 1967

Syre Thopas eek so wery was
ffor prykyng on þe softe gras
So fers was his corage 1970
That doun he leyde him in þat place
To maken his steede som solace
ffor he was so sauage 1973

O seynt mary benedicite
What eyleþ þis loue at me
To bynde me so sore 1976
Me dremed al þis night parde
An elf queen schal my lemman be
And slepe vnder my gore 1979

An Elf queene wol I loue ywys
ffor in þis worlde no man is
Worþy to be my make 1982
in toune
AH oþre wo*m*men I forsake
And to an elf queen I me bytake
By dale and eek by downe 1986

In to his sadel he cam anon
And prikeþ ouer stile and ston
And elfe queene for to aspie
Til he so longe haþ ryden and gon
Thate he fond in a priue woon
The cuntre of fayrye
¶ So wylde
ffor in þate cuntre nas þer non [leaf 216, back]
[. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*]
Neyþer wijfe ne childe /

Til him þer cam a Ioly geaunte
his name was cleped sire Olyphaunt
A *per*ilous man ofe dede
he seyde child by Termagaunt
Bute ife þou prike oute ofe myn haunte
Anon I slee þin steede
¶ Wiþ mace
here is þe queene ofe fayerye
Wiþ harpe and pype and Synphonye
dwellynge in þis place /

The childe seyde so mote I þe
To morne wol I meeten þe
When I haue myn armure
And 3ite I hope p*ar* ma fay
Thate þou schalte wiþ þis launcelay
Abeyen ite ful sore . . . . . .
¶ þurgh þine mawe / . . . . . .
Schal I perce ife I may . . . . . .
Or ite be fully pryme day
ffor heere þou schalte be slawe /

GROUP **B.** § **8.** SIR THOPAS. **Corpus MS.**

Sire Thopas drow a bak' ful faste
Þis geaunt' at' him stones caste /
Out' of' a felle staf' slynge
But' faire askapeþ child Thopas
And al it' was þurgh goddes gras
And þurgh his faire berynge

3it' lesteneþ lordes to my tale/
Murier þen þe nightyngale
ffor now I wole 3ou roune /
how sire Thopas with sydes smale /
Prykyng' ouer downe and dale /
Is come a3ain to toune

his mery men comaunded he /
To maken him boþe game and glee
ffor needes moste he fight'
Wiþ o geaunt' with hedes þre
ffor p*aramour* and Iolyte
Of' on þat' schon ful bright'

Do come he seyde myne menstrales
And gestours for to telle vs tales /
Anon in myn armyng'
Of' Romances þat' ben realles /
Of' popes and of' Cardynalles /
And eek' of' loue lykyng'

They fette him ferst' þe [1] swete wyn [1 *wrongly dotted under*]
[. . . . . *In margin of MS, in a later hand,* {And mede eek *in* a mas . . . & ryal spicerye. Of gyngebreed þat was f . .]
. . . . . .
. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*]
And lycoryus and eek' comyn
Wiþ sucre þat' is trye

[*go back to leaf* 210

He dede next' his white leere
Of' clop of' lake fyn and clere
A breche and eek' a scherte
And next' his scherte an aketoun
And ouer þat' an habergoun
ffor persyng' of' his herte

And ouer þat' a fyn hauberk'/
Was al y-wrought' of' Iewes werk'
fful strong' it' was of' plate
And ouer þat' his cote armure /
As whyt' as is a lyly flour
In which he wole debate

his schelde was al of' gold so red
And þer Inne was a boores heed
A charbokil him [1] besyde [1 bi his syde *in a later hand*]
And þer he swore on ale and breed
That' þe geaunt' schulde be deed
betyde what' betyde

his Iambes were of' quyrboyly
his swerdes scheþe of' yuory
his helme of' latoun bright'
his sadel was of' ruel bon
his bridel as þe sonne schon
Or as þe mone so light'

his spere was of' fyn Cypres
That' bedeþ werre and no þing' pees [*back of leaf* 210]
The heed ful scharpe y-grounde
his steede was al dappel gray
It' goþ an ambel by þe way
fful softely and rounde

In londe
Lo lordes myne heere[1] a fytte [[1] ys, *put in by a later hand*]
If ȝe wole eny more of hitte
To telle it wol I fonde 2080

[*Fytte II.*]

Now halde ȝoure mouþe p*ar* charite
Boþe knight and lady fre
And herkneþ to my spelle 2083
Of bataile and of chiualry
And of ladyes loue drery
Anon I wol ȝou telle 2086

Men speke of Romance of prys
Of horn child and of ypotys
Of Beuys and sire Gy 2089
Of sire libeus and pleyndamour
But sire Thopas he bereþ þe flour
Of real chiualry 2092

his goode steed al he bestrod
And forþ upon his way he glod
As sparcles out of þe bronde 2095
vpon his crest he bar a tour
And þ*er* Inne styked a lily flour
God schilde his corps fro schonde 2098

And for he was a knight aunterous
he nolde slepen in non hous
But liggen in his hood 2101
his brighte helme was his wanger
And by him bayteþ his destrer
Of herbes fyne and goode 2104

GROUP B. § 8. SIR THOPAS. Corpus MS.

[. . . . . *[In a later hand, in the margin, is* him self drank water of þe welle / as dede þe knyȝt sire Percyuelle / so worþili vnder wede]

. . . . . .

. . . . . .

. . . . *no gap in the MS.*] 2108

GROUP B. § 9. THOPAS-MELIBE LINK. Corpus MS.

NO more of' þis for goddes dignite [*on leaf* 210, *back*]
Quoþ oure hoste for þou makest' me
So wery of' þy lewednes
That' also wisly god me bles
Myn eres ake of' þin darsty speche [*go on to leaf* 217]
Now such a rymere þe deuel y beteche
This may be wel rym dogereH q*uod* he
Why so q*uod* I why wilt' þou lette me
More of' my tale þan anoþ*er* man
Seþens it' is þe beste Rym I can
By god q*uod* he pleynly I þe say
þou schalt' no lenger rymen heere to day
Thow dost' nought' elles but' dispendest' tyme
Sire at' O word þou schalt' no lengere ryme
Let' se whe þ*er* þou canst' telle ought' in geste
Or telle in prose somwhat' at' þe leste
In which þer be som merþe and som doctrine
Gladly quod I by goddes swete pyne
I wol 3ou telle a litel þing' in prose
þat' oughte like 3ou as I suppose /
Or elles certeyn 3e ben to daungerous
It' is a moral tale vertuous
Al be it' tolde somtyme in sondry wyse
Of' sondry folk' as I schal 3ou deuyse
As þus 3e wote euery eu*au*ngeliste
That' telleþ vs of' ihesu criste
Ne saiþ nou3t' al þing' as his felawe doþ
But' natheles here sentence is al soþ
And aH acorden as in here sentence
Al be þer in here tellyng' difference

ffor some of hem seyn more and some lesse
Whan þey his pytous passioun expresse
I mene of mark matheu luke and Iohn
But douteles here sentence is al on
Therfore lordinges all I 3ou beseche
If þat 3e þinke I varie in my speche
As þus if þat I telle somwhat more
Of prouerbis þen 3e haue herd byfore
Comprehendit in þis litel tretis heere
To enforce with þeffecte of my matiere
And þough I nadde[1] þe same wordes saye [leaf 217, back] [1 nat *in a later hand*]
As 3e han herd 3it to alle 3ou I praye
Blameþ me nought for as in my sentence
3e schal nought fynde mochil difference /
ffro þe sentence of þe tretys lyyte[2] [2 lite *in a later hand*]
After þe which þis mery tale I wryte
And[3] herkene what I schal seye [3 þerfore *added on margin of MS in another hand*]
And let me telle my tale I 3ou preye /

GROUP B. § 10. MELIBEUS. Corpus MS.

[There are no line-numbers or breaks between the paragraphs in the MS. Tyrwhitt's breaks are kept here to prevent slight differences in the Six Texts throwing out many lines.]

[Corpus MS, on leaf 217, *back.]*

¶ C^m^. xx^m^.

Here bygynneþ Chauceres tale of^t^ Melibe and his wyf^t^ Prudence and his doughter Sapience

[2157] Ȝong^t^ man whilom called Melibe mighty & riche bigate vpon his wyf^t^ þat^t^ called was Prudence. a doughter which þat^t^ cleped was Sapience

[2158] ¶ vpon a day felle þat^t^ he for his disporte is went^t^ in to þe feeldes him to pleye [2159] his wyf^t^ and eek^t^ his doughter haþ he lefte wiþinne his hous of^t^ which þe dores weren faste schette. [2160] ffoure of^t^ his olde foos han it aspyed. and setten ladderes to þe walles of^t^ his hous and by þe wyndowes ben y-entred [2161] ¶ and beeten his wyf^t^ and wounded his doughter with fyue mortaille woundes in .v. sondry places. [2162] þis is to say in hire feet^t^ in hire hand. in hire eeres in hire nose in hire mouþ ¶ and laften hire for deed and wenten here wey

[2163] ¶ When Melibe*us* retourned was aȝein in-til his hous and sawe al þis meschief^t^ ¶ he y-like a mad man rendyng^t^ his cloþes gan to weepe and crye

[2164] ¶ Prudence his wyf^t^ as ferforþ as sche dorste bysoughte him of^t^ his weepyng^t^ for to stynte [2165] ¶ but nouȝt^t^ for-þy he gan to wepe and crye euer lenger þe more

[2166] ¶ This noble wyf^t^ prudence remembred hire on þe sentence of^t^ Ovide in his bok^t^ þat^t^ cleped is þe remedy of^t^ loue where he saiþ [2167] he is a fool þat^t^ distourbeþ þe mooder for to wepe in þe deþ of^t^ hire childe til sche haue wepte hire fille as for a certein tyme [2168] Then schal man don his diligence with amyable wordes hire to comforte and to preye hire of^t^

hire wepyng' for to stynte [2169] ¶ ffor which̄ resoun þis noble prudence suffred hire housbond for to weepe and crye as for a certeyn space [2170] ¶ And when sche saugh̄ hire tyme sche seyde him in þis wyse ¶ Allas my lord q*uod* sche why make ȝe ȝoure self' for to be ylike a fool [2171] ffor soþe it' ap*er*tyneþ nouȝt' to a wise man to maken such a sorwe [2172] ¶ ȝoure doughter wiþ þe grace [1]of god schal be warisshed and askape [2173] ¶ And all*e* were it' so þat' sche right' now were deed: ȝe oughte nouȝt' as for hire deþ ȝoure self' to destryue [2174] ¶ Senek' saiþ þe wiseman schal nouȝt' take to gret' discomfort' for þe deþ of' his children [2175] but' certes he schulde suffre it' in pacience as wel as he abydeþ þe deþ of' his owen p*ro*pre p*er*sone

[2176] ¶ This Melibeus answerde anon and sayde ¶ What' man q*uod* he schulde of' his wepyng' stynte þat' haþ so gret' a cause for to weepe [2177] ¶ Ih*esus* c*rist'* oure lord himself' wepte for þe deþ of' lazarus his freend [2178] ¶ Prudens answerde ¶ certes wel I woot' a-tempre weepyng' is nouȝt' defendid vnto him þat' sorwful is among' folk' in sorwe ¶ But' it' is raþer y-gr*a*unted him to wepe [2179] ¶ The apostel Poule. vnto þe Romayns writeþ. Man schal reioyse wiþ hem þat' maken ioye ¶ And weepen wiþ suche folk' as wepen [2180] ¶ But þough̄ a-tempre wepynge be y-gr*a*unted Outragous weepyng' certes is defended [2181] ¶ Mesurable wepyng' schulde be considered after þe lore þat' techeþ vs Senek ¶ Senek/
[2182] ¶ Whan þat' þi freend is deed let' nought' þin yen to moyste ben of' teeres ne to druye ¶ Al þough̄ þe teeres comen of' þin eyen let' hem nouȝt' fallen [2183] ¶ And whan þou hast' forgon þi frende I rede þou do þy diligence to gete þe anoþ*er*. and þis is more wiser þan for to wepe for þyn freend þe which þat' þou hast' lore ¶ ffor þer-in is no boote [2184] ¶ And þerfore if' þou lust' gouerne þe by Sapience: putte awey sorwe of' ȝoure herte. [2185] ¶ Remembreþ ȝou þat' Ih*esus* Cyrak' / seiþ ¶ Ihesus Cyrak /

a man þat' is Ioyous and glad in herte hit' him conserueþ florisching' in his age ¶ But' soþly sorwful herte makeþ his bones dryue [2186] ¶ he saiþ eek þus

¶ Salomon ¶ þat' sorwe in herte sleþ ful many a man) [2187] Salamon. seiþ þat' right' as moughtes in þe schepes flees annoyeþ to þe cloþes and þe smale wormes of' þe trees ¶ Right' so anoyeþ sorwe to þe herte [2188] ¶ Wherfore we ouȝt as wel in þe deþ of' oure children as in þe losse of' oure good haue pacience

¶ Iob [2189] ¶ Remembreþ ȝow vpon þe pacient' Iob. whan he hadde lost' his children and his temperel substañce / In his body endured and suffred many a greuous temptacion ¶ ȝet' sayde he þus [2190] ¶ Oure lord quod he haþ ȝoue it' me ¶ Oure lord haþ byreft' it' me Right' so as oure lord haþ wolde right' so be it don. y-blessed be þe name of oure lord [2191] ¶ To þese afore þinges Melibeus answerde to his wyf' dame Prudence / Alle þine wordes quod he ben soþe and þerto profitable ¶ But' trewly myn herte is troubled wiþ þis sorwe so greuously þat' I not' what' to done [2192] ¶ let' calle quod Prudence þin trewe frendes alle and þin lynage whiche þat' ben wise Telle hem þyn [caas] [1] and herkne what' þay say in counseillynge and ȝou gouerneth þer after here

Salomon sentence [2193] Salomon saiþ werk' alle þing' by counseil and þou schalt' neuer repente þe

[2194] ¶ Thenne by þe counseil of' his wyf' dame Prudence: Melibeus let' callen a gret' congregacioñ of folk' [2195] [. . . . . *no gap*] olde and ȝonge and some of' his olde enemys reconsiled as by here semblañt in to his loue and in to his grace [2196] ¶ And þer-wiþ-al þer come somme of his olde neyghebours and þat' deden him reuerence more for drede þan for loue as it' happeþ ofte [2197] ¶ Ther comeþ also ful many subtile flaterers and wyse aduocatis lerned in þe lawe

[2198] And whan þis folk / togidre assembled were: This Melibeus in sorwful wise schewed hem þis caas

[2199] ¶ And by þe manere of' þis speche he bar in his herte a cruel yre redy to don vengeaunce vpon his foos And sodeynly desired þat' þe werre schulde begynne [2200] ¶ But' naþeles ȝit' asked he here counseil vpon þis matere [2201] A Surgien by licence and assent' of' suche as were wyse vp ros vnto Melibeus and sayde as ȝe may heere

[2202] Sire q*uod* he as to vs surgiens aperteyneþ to eu*er*y wigh't' þe beste þat' we can were as we ben wiþholde ¶ And to oure paciences þat' we do no damages [2203] þ*er*fore it happeþ many tymes and ofte þat' when tuo men haue euerich wounded oþ*er* O same Surgien heleþ hem boþe [2204] ¶ Wherfore vnto oure art' it' nys nouȝt' p*er*tynent' to norische werre ne parties to supporte [2205] ¶ But' certes as to þe warisshyng' of' ȝour doughter be it' so þat' sche is p*er*ilously wounded: we schulde do so ententyfly busynes fro day to night' þat' wiþ þe grace of' god sche schal be sound and hool as sone as it' is possible [2206] ¶ Alle men in þis same wyse answerden and þe Phisiciens. saue þat' þay sayden a fewe wordes more [2207] þat' righ't' as maladies ben heled by þe contraries Righ't' so schal men warissche werre by vengaunce [2208] his neygheburs fulle of' enuye his feynede freendes þat' semed reconsiled his flaterers [2209] maden semblaunt of' wepyng' enpeyred and engregged meche of' his matiere in preysynge gretly Melibeus of' migh't' of' power of' riches and of' frendes despysynge þe power of' his adu*er*saries [2210] and sayden outrely þat' he anon schulde awreken him on his enemys and begynne werre

[2211] ¶ Vp ros þanne an aduoket' þat' was wys and sayde by leue and by counseil of' oþere þat' were wyse ¶ And sayde [2212] lordynges the neede for þe which we ben assembled in þis place is a ful heuy þing' and an heigh̄ matiere [2213] by cause of' þe wrong' and of' þe wikkednesse þat' haþ ben don and eeke by resoun of' þe grete damage /

in tyme comynge ben possible to [1]falle for þis same cause [2214] and eek[t] by resoun Of[t] þe grete richesse and power of[t] þe parties boþe [2215] ¶ ffor þe whiche resouns it[t] were a gret[t] *per*ile for to erren in þis matier*e* // [2216] wherfore melibeus þis is oure sentence we counseile ȝou abouen all*e* þinges þat[t] right[t] anon þou do þi diligence in kepyng[t] of[t] þi *pro*pre *per*sone in suche a wyse þat þou ne wante none aspye ne wacche þi body for to saue [2217] ¶ And after þat[t] we counseile þat þou sette in þin hous suffisaunt[t] garnysoun ¶ So þat[t] þey may as wel þy body and þin hous defende [2218] ¶ But[t] certes for to meve werre ne sodeinly for to do vengeance ¶ We may nouȝt[t] deme in so litel tyme þat[t] it[t] were profitable [2219] wherfore we asken leysir and space to haue deliberacioñ in þis cas to deme [2220] for þe co*m*mune p*ro*uerbe saiþ þus. he. þat[t] sone demeþ sone schal repente [2221] ¶ And eek[t] men say þus þat[t] þilke Iuge is wys þat[t] sone vnderstandeþ a matiere and Iugeþ by leysyr [2222] ¶ ffor al be it[t] so þat[t] all*e* taryynge be anoyful: algates it[t] nys nouȝt[t] to reproue in ȝeuyng[t] of Iuggementz ne in vengaunce takynge whanne it[t] is suffisaunt[t] and resonable. [2223] and þat[t] schewed oure lord ih*esus* crist[t] by ensample ¶ ffor when þat[t] þe wo*m*man was taken in aduoutrye was brought[t] in his presens to knowe what[t] schal ben don with hire p*er*sone ¶ Al be it[t] so þat[t] he wiste wel himself[t] what[t] þat[t] he wolde answere: ȝit[t] ne wolde he nouȝt[t] answere sodeinly but[t] he wolde haue deliberacioñ and in þe grounde he wrot[t] twyes [2224] ¶ And by þis cause we axen deliberacioñ And we schullen þanne by þe *grac*e of[t] god counseile þe þing*e* þat[t] schal be profitable

[2225] ¶ Vp sterte þenne þe ȝonge folk[t] atones: and þe moste partye of[t] þat[t] company haue scorned þis olde wise ma*n* and bygonne to make noyse and sayden [2226] right[t] so ¶ as whiles þat[t] yren is hoot men schulden smyte ¶ Right[t] so men schulden wreken here wronges whiles

þay ben freissche and newe ¶ And with lowde voys þey cryden werre werre

[2227] vp ros þe on of þe olde wise and with his hande he made a contynaunce þat þey schulde halden hem stille and ȝiuen hem audience [2228] ¶ lordynges quod he þer is ful many a man þat crieþ werre werre þat wot ful litel what þat werre amounteþ [2229] ¶ werre at his bygynnyng haþ so gret an enteryng and so large ¶ That euery wiȝt may entre when him likeþ. and lightly fynde werre [2230] ¶ But certes to what ende þat schal þer-of bifalle it nys nouȝt lightly to knowe [2231] ¶ whan þat werre is ones bygonne þer is ful many a childe vnborne of his moder þat schal sterue ȝong by cause of þilke werre Oþer elles lyue in sorwe and deye in wrecchednesse [2232] ¶ And þerfore er þat eny werre be bygonne men mosten han gret counseil and good deliberacioñ [2233] ¶ And when þis olde man wende to enforcen his tale by resoñ wel neiȝ alle at ones bygonne for to ryse for to breken his tale / and beden him fuloften of his wordes for to abregge [2234] ¶ ffor soþly he þat precheþ to hem þat luste nouȝt his wordes ne his sermoñ hem annoyeþ [2235] ¶ ffor Ihesus Cirak saiþ þat musyke in wepynge is annoyous þing þus moche is to sayn as moche annoyeþ to speke bifore folk to whiche his speche annoyeþ: as it is for to syngen byforn him þat wepeþ [2236] ¶ And when þis wise man saugh þat him wantede audience: al schamfast he sette him doun aȝein. [2237] ffor Salomon seiþ. þer as þou myst haue non audience: enforce þe nouȝt to speke [2238] ¶ I se wel quod þis wyse man þat þe commune prouerbe is soþ þat good counseil wanteþ. whan it is most nede

¶ Ihesus Cirak /

¶ Salomon

[2239] ¶ ȝit hadde þis Melibeus in his counseille many folk þat priuely in his eere counseled him certein þing. and counseilled him þe contrary in general audience

[2240] ¶ When Melibeus hadde herd þat þe gretteste

party of' his counseil were acorded þat' he schulde make werre: anon he consentede to here counseilyng ¶ and fully affermed to here sentence [2241] ¶ Thanne dame Prudence whan þat' sche saugħ how þat' hire housbonde schope him for to wreke him on his foes and to begynne werre ¶ Sche in ful humble wyse whan sche saugħ hire tyme / seyde him in þise wordes [2242] ¶ My lord *quod* sche I ȝou beseche as hertely as I dar and can ¶ Ne haste ȝou nouȝt' to faste ¶ And afore alle guerdouns ȝif' me audience [2243] ¶ ffor Pieres Alpħons. saiþ ¶ O who so doþ to þe good oþer harme haste þe nought' to quyten hit ¶ ffor in þis wise þy frend wole abyde and þin enemy schal þe lengere lyue in drede [2244] ¶ The prouerbe saiþ þat' he hasteþ him wel þat' wisly can abyde ¶ and in wicked haste is no *pro*fyte

[2245] ¶ This melybe answerde to his wijf' ¶ ¶ Prudence I p*ur*pose nought' q*uod* he to werke by þy counseille for many causes and resoñs ¶ ffor certes eu*ery* wight' wolde halde me þenne a fool [2246] ¶ This is for to say ¶ If' I for þy counseillyng' wolde chaunge þinges þat' ben ordeynt' and affermed by so many wyse [2247] ¶ Secoundly I say þat' alle wo*m*men ben þikke and none goode of' hem alle ffor of' a þousend men saiþ Salomo*n* I fand a good man But' certes of alle wo*m*men fond I neuer good wo*m*man [2248] ¶ And also c*er*tes if I gouerned me by þy counseil it' schulde seme þat' I hadde ȝoue to þe ouer me þe maystrie ¶ and god forbede þat' it' so were [2249] ¶ ffor Ih*esus* Cyrak' saiþ. þat if' þin wijf' haue maistrie: sche is contrarious to hire housebonde [2250] ¶ and Salomon saiþ ¶ Neuer in þy lyf' to þy wyf' ne to þy childe ne to þy freende ne ȝiue no power ouer þi self' ¶ ffor bettre it' were þat' þin children asken of þy p*er*sone þinges þat hem needeþ ¶ þen þou [be] þi self' in þe handes of' þin children [2251] ¶ And also if' I wole wirche by þi counseylyng': certes my counseille moste som tyme be secree til it' were tyme þat' it' moste be

knowe and þis ne may nought be doo [2252. For it is written, 'þe Iangelry of wo*m*men can huyde þinges þat' þey wot' nou3t' ' [2253] Furthermore, the philosopher saith, 'in wikked counseil, wo*m*men venquysshe þ men;' and for these reasons I ought not to make use of thy counsel. (*See Prudence's answers to Reasons* 4 *&* 5, *below.*)]

[2254] ¶ When dame Prudence ful debonerly and wiþ alle pacience hadde herde alle þat' hire housbonde liked for to say: Then asked sche of' him licence for to speke and sayde in þis wise [2255] ¶ My lord q*uod* sche. as to 3oure ferste resoun it' may lightly ben answerde ¶ ffor I say þat' it' nys foly to chaunge counseille when þe þing' is chaunged Oþer elles when þe þing' semeþ oþer weyes þenne it' semeþ aforn [2256] ¶ And more ouer I say þay þat' 3e haue sworn and behight' to parfourme 3oure emprise [*et tu la laissoies a faire* (Le Ménagier de Paris, i. 193)] by iuste cause: men schulde nou3t seyn þ*er*fore þat' 3e were a lyere ne forsworn [2257] ¶ ffor þe book' seiþ þat' þe wise man makeþ no lesynge when he torneþ his corage / to þe bettre [2258] ¶ And if' it' be so þat' 3oure emprise be establissht' and ordeyned by gret' multitude of' folk ¶ 3et' þar þe nought' acomplyse þilke ordynaunce but' 3ou like [2259] ¶ ffor þe trouþe of' þinges and for p*ro*fite ben raþer founde. in fewe folk' þat' ben wise / and fulle of' resoñ þen by gret' multitude of' folk' þer eu*er*y man cryeþ and clattereþ when him likeþ ¶ soþly such multitude nys nought honeste [2260] and as to þe secounde resoñ wher as 3e sayn þat' alle wo*m*men ben wikke: Saue 3oure g*rac*e ffor certes 3e despyseþ alle wo*m*men in þis wise. and he þat alle despiseþ all dispyseþ as seiþ þe book' [2261] ¶ And Senek' seiþ þat' who so wole haue sapience. schal no man dispreyse ¶ But' he schal gladly teche þe science þat' he can wiþouten p*re*sumpsioun or pryde [2262] and suche þinges þat' he nought' ne can he schal nou3t' be asshamed to lere him) and to enquere of' lasse

folk' þan of' himself' [2263] ¶ And sire þat' þer haþ ben ful many a good wo*m*man may lightly be proued [2264] ¶ certes sire oure lord ih*es*u crist' nolde neuer han descendet' to be borne of' a wo*m*man if' alle wo*m*men hadde be wicke [2265] ¶ And after þat for þe grete bounte þat' is in wo*m*men oure lord Ih*esus* when he was rysen fro deþ to lyfe appered raþer to wo*m*man þan to his apostels [2266] ¶ and þoug̃h þat' Salomon saiþ þat' he ne fond neuer wo*m*man good it' [1]fo!weþ nough̃t þerfore þat alle wo*m*men ben wikke [2267] ¶ For þoug̃h þat' he ne fonde no good wo*m*man Certes many ano*þer* man haþ founden many a wo*m*man ful good and trewe [2268] Or elles p*er*auentur*e* þe entent' of' Salamo*n* was þus þat' as in souereyn bounte he fande no wo*m*man [2269] This is to say þat' þer nys no wigh̃t' þat' haþ p*ar*fyt' bounte saue god allone as he himself' recordeþ in his eu*au*n-gelist' [2270] ¶ For þ*er* nys no creature so good that' him ne wanteþ som what/ of' þe p*er*feccion̄ of' god þat' is his makere [2271] ¶ The þridde resoun is þis ȝe say þat' if' ȝe gou*er*ne ȝou by my counseil hit' schulde seme þat' ȝe hadde ȝoue me þe maystry And þe lordschip̄ of' ȝoure p*er*sone // [2272] Sire saue ȝoure g*ra*ce hit nys nought' so ¶ For if' so were þ*at* no man schulde be counseled but' oonly of' hem þat' hadde lorschipe and maystrye of' his p*er*sone men nolde nough̃t be counseiled so ofte. [2273] For soþly þilke men þat' askeþ counseil of' a purpos ¶ ȝet' haþ he free wille wheþer he wol do after þat' counsel or no [2274] ¶ And as to ȝoure fourþe resoñ þer as ȝe sayn þat' þe Iangelry of wo*m*men can huyde þinges þat' þey wot' nouȝt' ¶ As who saiþ þat' a wo*m*man can nough̃t' huyde what' sche wot' [2275] ¶ Sire þese wordes ben vnder-stonde of' wo*m*men þ*at'* ben Iangleresses and wicked [2276] of' whiche wo*m*men men sayn þat' þre þinges dryueþ a man out' of' his hous. That' is to say Smoke droppyng' of' Rayn and wickidde wyfes [2277] And

swiche wo*m*men saiþ Salamo*n* þat' he were bettre to dwelle in desert' þan with a wo*m*man þat is ryetous [2278] And sire by 3oure leue þat' am nought' I [2279] ¶ For 3e haue ful ofte assayed my grete Cilence and my grete pacience and eek' how wel þat he can huyde and hele þinges þat' men oughten secrely to huyden [2280] ¶ and soþ as to 3oure fifte resoñ wher as 3e say þat' in wikked counseil wo*m*men venquysshe þ men ¶ God wot' þilke resoñ stant' heere in no stede [2281] ¶ For vnderstandeth now 3e axeth counseil for to do wikkednes [2282] and if' 3e wolen werke wikkednesse and 3oure wijf' restreyneþ þilke wikked p*ur*pos and ou*er*come 3ou by resoñ and by good counseil: [2283] certes 3our*e* wyf' oughte raþer to be preysed þen to be blamed [2284] ¶ This scholde 3e vnderstande þe philosophre þat' saiþ In wicked counseil wo*m*men venquysshen here housebondes [2285] ¶ and þere as 3e blamen all*e* wo*m*men & here resoñs: I schal schewe 3ou by many ensamples þat' many wo*m*me*n* han ben ful goode and 3et' ben and here counsel holsome and p*ro*fitable [2286] ¶ eeke some men han sayde þat' þe counselyng' of' wo*m*men is eyþer to deere or elles to lytel of' pris [2287] ¶ But' al be it' so þat' ful [1]many wo*m*man is badde and here counseil vile & nou3t' worþ: 3et' han men founde many a good wo*m*man and ful discret' and wys in counselyng' // [2288] lo Iacob þurgh þe goode counseil of' his moder Rebekka wan þe benysoñ of' his fader and þe lordschipe ouer all*e* his breþeren. [2289] Iudith þurgh hire goode counseil delyuered þe Cite of' Buphelye in which sche dwelte out' of' þe lande of' Olyu*er*ne þat' hadde it' al byseged and wolde han al destruyet' it' [2290] ¶ Abegayle delyuered Nabal hir housbonde fro Dauid þe king' þat' wolde han slayn him and appaysede þe yre of' þe king' by hire witte and by hire goode counseilyng' [2291] ¶¶ Ester by hire counceil enchaunced gretly þe poeple of' god in þe Regne of' Assueres þe king' [2292] and þe same bounte. in good counseiling' of'

many a wo*m*man may men telle [2293] ¶ And furþ*er*more whan þat oure lord had created Ad*a*m oure forme fader: he sayde in þis wise / [2294] It nys nought good to be a man allone ¶ Make we an helper semblable to himself. [2295] ¶ Here may ȝe see þat if þat wo*m*man were nouȝt good and hire counseil good and *pro*fytable: [2296] Oure lord god of heuene ne wolde neuer han y-wrouȝt hem ne called hem þe helper of man [. . . . . *no gap.*] [2297] ¶ And þer sayde ones a clerk in tuo vers / what is bettre þan a good Iaspre [. . . . . *no gap.*] wisdom [2298] And what is bettre þan wisdam wo*m*man and what is bettre þan wo*m*man þat is a good wo*m*man no þing [2299] ¶ And sire by many of oþer resoñs may ȝe seen þat many wo*m*men ben goode and eek here cou*n*seil good and profitable [2300] ¶ And þerfore sire if ȝe wiln truste to my counseil: I schal restore ȝou ȝoure doughter hool and sound [2301] ¶ And eek þat I wol to ȝou don so moche þat ȝe schuln haue honour in þis caas

[2302] ¶ When melybe had herde þe wordes of his wijf Prudence: he sayde þus [2303] þat þe wordes of Salamon is soþ ¶ For he saiþ þat wordes þat ben' spoken discretly by ordynau*n*ce ben hony combes ffor þey ȝiuen swetnesse to þe soule and holsomnes to þe body [2304] ¶ And wyf by cause of þine swete wordes and eeke for I haue y-proued and sayd þin grete sapience and þin grete trouþe I wol gouerne me by þyn counseyl in all*e* þing

[2305] ¶ Now sire q*uod* dame Prudence and seþenes ȝe fouche sauf to be gouerned by my counseil: I wol enforme ȝou how þat ȝe schuln gouerne ȝoure self in chesyng of ȝoure counseilo*ur*s [2306] ¶ ȝe schuln ferst fourme all*e* ȝour*e* wekes mekely byseken to þe hihe god þat he wol ben ȝour counseilour [2307] And schapeþ ȝou to such entent þat he ȝiue ȝou counseil and confort as taughte Thobye [1] to his sone [2308] at all*e* tymes. thou schalt/ blesse

god and preyen him to dresse / þine weyes . and loke also þat þine counseiles ben in him for euermore [2309] ¶ Seint Iame saiþ ¶ If any of 3ou haue neede of Sapience: aske it of god [2310] ¶ And afterward þenne schullen 3e take counsel in 3oure self and examyn wel 3oure owne þou3tes of swiche þinges as 3ou þenkeþ þat is best for 3oure profyt [2311] ¶ And þenne schulle 3e dryue fro 3oure hertes þinges þat ben contrarious to good counseil [2312] þat is to say . Ire . Coueytise . and hastynes .

[2313] ffirst he þat askeþ counseil of himself: certes he moste be wiþouten Ire [. . . . . [2314] . . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] and wraþþe in himself he weneþ alwey þat he may do þing þat he may not do [2315] ¶ And secoundly he þat is Irous and wroþ he [. . . . . [2316] *no gap in the MS.*] may nought wel counseille [2317] ¶ The þridde is þis . þat he þat is Irous and wroþ as saiþ Senek ne may nought speke but blameful þinges [2318] And with þilke vicious wordes he stereþ oþer folk to anger and to Ire [2319] And eek sire 3e moste drede coueytise out of 3oure herte . [2320] ffor þe apostel seiþ þat coueytise is þe roote of alle harmes. [2321] And trusteth right wel þat a coueytous man ne can nought deme ne þenke but only to fulfille þe ende of his coueytise . [2322] and certes þat ne may neuer be acomplised . ffor euer þe more habundance þat he haþ of richesse: þe more he desireþ [2323] ¶ And sire 3e moste also driue out of 3o*ur* hertes hastynes [2324] ¶ For certes 3e may nou3t deme for þe beste a sodeyn þought þat falleþ in 3oure herte ¶ But 3e moste avise 3ou on hit ful ofte [2325] ¶ ffor as 3e haue herd here biforn þe comune p*ro*verbe is þis That he þat sone demeþ sone repenteþ //

[2326] Sire 3e ne be nou3t alwey in ylike disposicioñ [2327] ffor certes som þing þat some tyme semeþ to 3ou þat is good for to do . Anoþer tyme it semeþ to 3ou þe cont*ra*rie . [*A great bit is now omitted in Corpus.*]

[Laud MS 600, leaf 233]

[2328] [When ye han taken counseile in your self· And han demed bi good deliberacion siche þing as you semiþ best [2329] ¶ þanne rede I / you that ye kepe it secre / [2330] bewrie not your counseile to no persone. bot it so be. þat ye wene sikerli þat þurgh your bewrieng / your condicion shal be to you þe more profitable [2331] ¶ For Ihesus Sirac saiþ ¶ Neiþer to þi foo ne to þi frende. discouer not þi secre ne þi foli. [2332] for þai wol yeue you audience and loking and supportacioñ in þi presence and scorne in þi absence. [2333] ¶ Anoþer clerc saiþ þat scarsli shalt þou finde any persone þat mai kepe counseil secreli. [2334] ¶ The book saiþ while þou kepest þi counsail in þin hert þou kepist it in þi prison / [2335] and whan þou bewriest þi counsaile to any wight / he holdeþ þe in his snare./ [2336] And þerfore you is better hide your counsaile. in your hert / þan praien him to whom ye haue bewried your counseil þat he wol kepe it clos and stille. [2337] ¶ For Seneca saiþ if so be. þat þou ne maist not. þin owne counseile hide. How darst þou praien any oþer wight / þi counseil secreli to kepe. [2338] ¶ Bot naþeles if þou wene sicurli / þat þi bewriyng· of þi counsaile to a persone wol make þi condicion to stonde in a better plite. Then shalt þou tellen him þi counseil in þis wise [2339] ¶ First þou shalt make no semblant / where þe were leuer werre or pees. or þis. or þat. ne shew him not þi wille / and þin entent [2340] ¶ For trust wel þat comunli þise counseilours. ben flaterers And [2341] namely þe counseillours of grete lordes. [2342] for þei enforcen hem alwei. raþer to speke plesant wordes. enclynyng to þe lordes

nota

[1 Laud MS, leaf 233, back]

lust· þan wordes þat ben trewe. and profitable. [2343][1] ¶ And þerfore men sai þat þe riche man haþ selden good counsaile / bot he haue it of himself [2344] ¶ And aftir þat þou shalt considre þi frendes and þi enemyes ./ [2345] And as touching þi frendes. þou shalt con-

sidre whiche of hem beth most faiþful and most wise. and eldest and most approued in coun*s*eilyng [2346] and of hem shalt þou axe þi coun*s*aile as þe caas requireth [Laud MS 600]

[2347] ¶ I / sai þat first ye shul clepe to youre coun*s*aile / youre frendes þat ben trewe./ [2348] For Salamon saiþ / for right as þe hert of a man delitiþ in sauo*ur*. þat is soote / right so þe coun*s*aile of your trewe frendes / yeueþ swetnes to þe soule [2349] ¶ He saiþ also þer mai noþing be likned to þe trewe frende / [2350] ¶ For certes gold ne siluer be not so moche worþ. as þe good wille of a trewe frende / [2351] and eke he saiþ þat a trewe frende. is a stronge defence / who þat it findeþ. certis he findeþ a gret treso*ur* [2352] ¶ þene shul ye eke considre / if þat youre trewe frendes ben discrete and wise / for þe book saiþ. axe þi counsaile alwai of hem þat ben wise. [2353] And bi þis same resoun. shul ye clepe to youre counsaile of youre frendes þat ben age. siche as haue sai sightes and ben expert in mony þinges. and ben approued in counseiling. [2354] for þe book saiþ þat in olde men is þe sapience. and in longe time þe prudence [2355] ¶ And tullius saiþ þat grete þinges ben not aye accompleed bi strengþe ne bi delyuernes of bodi. bot bi good counsail. bi auctorite of p*er*sones and bi science. þe whiche þre þinges ben not feble bi age./ bot certes þai enforcen to encresen dai by dai. [2356] and þan shul ye kepe þis for a gen*er*al rewle ¶ First shul ye clepe to youre coun*s*aile a fewe of yo*ur* frendes þat ben especial [2357] ¶ For Salamon saiþ mony frendes haue þou. bot among a þousand chese þe on to be þi conseillo*ur* / [2358] For al be it so þat þou first ne telle þi counseil bot to a fewe. þou maist aftirward telle it to moo folk / if it be nede. [2359] bot loke alwey þat þi coun*s*eilours haue þi[l]k þre condiciou*n*s. þat I / haue said

[Laud MS] before. þat is to sai þat þei be trewe and olde. and of wis experience. [2360] ¶ And wirke not alwey in euery nede / bi on counseilour allone. For somtyme behoueþ it be counseilid bi many. [2361] ¶ For Salamon saiþ. Saluacion of þinges is. where as þer ben many counselers.] [Laud MS *extract ends*]

[Corpus MS, *on leaf* 221, *back*] [2362] Now haue I tolde 3ou of' which folk' 3e scholde be counseled NOw wol I teche 3ou which counseil 3e owe to eschewe [2363] fferst' 3e schuln eschewe þe counseilyng' of' fooles. Salomon saiþ take no counseil of' a fool ffor he wol counseile but' after his owne luste and his affectiõns [2364] ¶ The book/ saiþ þat' þe proprete of' a fool is þis ¶ he troweþ lightly harme of' euery wigħt' and lightly troweþ a bounte in himself' [2365] ¶ Thou schalt' eke eschewe þe counseiling' of' alle flaterers whiche enforcen hem raþer to preysen 3oure persone by flaterye þan for to telle 3ou þe soþfastnesse of' þinges

[2366] ¶ Wherfore Tullius saiþ among' alle þe pestilence [1]þat ben in frendschipe þe grettest' is flaterie ¶ And þerfore is it' more nede þat' þou eschewe and drede flaterers þan any oþer poeple / [2367] The book' saiþ þou schalt' raþer [drede and] fle fro þe swete wordes of' flaterynge & preysyng' þen fro þe egre wordes of' þy frend þat' saiþ þe þin soþes [2368] Salomon saiþ þat' þe wordes of' a flaterer is a snare to cacche Innocence [2369] ¶ he saiþ also. he þat' speketh to his frend wordes of' swetnes and of' plesañce: setteþ a nette biforn his feet' to cacche him [2370] ¶ And þerfore Tullius saiþ Enclyne nou3t' þin eeres to flaterers Ne take no counseil of' wordes of' flaterie / [2371] and Catoñ saiþ ¶ Avise þe wel and eschewe þe wordes of' swetnes and of' plesaunce [2372] ¶ And eek' þou schalt' eschewe þe counsellyng' of' þine olde enemys þat' be reconsiled [2373] The book' saiþ þat' no wigħt' retourneþ saufly in to þe

grace of' his olde enemy [2374] ¶ And Isope saiþ ¶ Ne truste nouȝt' to hem to whiche som tyme þou hast' had werre / or enmyte ne telle hem nouȝt' þi counseille [2375] ¶ And Senek' telleþ þe cause why it' may nought' be saith he þat where long' tyme fuyr haþ endured þat' þer dwelleþ som tyme vapour of' hete [2376] ¶ And þerfore saiþ Salamon in þin olde foo truste þou neuere [2377] ffor sikerly þough þin enemy be reconsiled and makeþ þe chere of' humilite and lowteþ to þe wiþ his heed ne truste him neuere [2378] ffor certes he makeþ þilke feyned humilite more for his profyt' þan for eny humilite or for eny loue of' þin persone by [. . . . . *no gap*] such feyned contynance The which victory he might' haue by stryf' or werre [2379] And Petre Alfouns saiþ. make no felaschipe wiþ þine olde enemyes: ffor if' þou do hem bounte þey wollen peruerten hit' to wickednesse [2380] And eeke þou most' eschewe þe counseilyng' of' hem þat ben þin seruañtz and beren the gret' reuerence ffor perauenture þey seyn it' more for drede þan for loue [2381] ¶ And þerfore saiþ a Philosophre in þis wise ¶ Ther nys no wight' parfytly trewe to him þat' he to sore dredeþ [2382] ¶ And Tullius saiþ ¶ Ther nys no wight' so gret' of' eny emperour þat' longe may endure / but' if' he haue loue of' þe poeple and drede [2383] ¶ Thow schalt' eschewe also þe counseiling' of' folk' þat ben drunkelewe for þey ne can no counselle huyde. [2384] Salamon saiþ þer nys no pryuyte þer as regneþ drunkenes [2385] ¶ ȝe schullen han also in suspecte to þe counseling' of' such folk' as counseile ȝow a þing' priuily and counseile ȝou a þing' þat' is contrarie openly · [2386] ffor Cassidory saiþ þat it' is a maner sleight̄e to hyndre his enemy when [1]he scheweþ to don a þing' openly and werkeþ priuily þe contrarie [2387] ¶ Thou schalt' haue also in þin suspecte þe coñselynge of' wikked folk' [. . . . . *no gap*] þat is alwey ful

of fraude [2388] and Dauid saiþ þat blisful is þe man þat haþ nought folwed þe counseling of schrewes [2389] ¶ Thow schalt also eschewe þe counseilling of 3ong folk ffor here counseilyng nys nogt rype as Salomon saiþ

[2390] ¶ Now sire siþenes I haue schewed 3ou of which folk 3e schuln take counsel and of which folk 3e schuln folwe þe counsel / [2391] Now wol I teche 3ou how 3e schuln examyn 3oure counsel after the doctrine of Tullius [2392] in þe examynyng þenne of 3oure counseilour 3e schuln considere many þinges [2393] ¶ Alþer first þou schalt considere þilke þing þat þou purposest and vpon what þing þou wolt han counseH þat verray trouþe be sayde and conserued þis is to say telle trewly þin tale [2394] ¶ For he þat saiþ fals may [not] wel be counseiled in þat caas of which [he lyeth] [2395] ¶ And after þis þou schalt consideren þe þinges þat acorden to þat þou purposest for to be by þin counseilours if reson̄ acordeþ þerto [2396] ¶ And eek if þi might may atteyne þerto ¶ And if þe more part and þe bettre part of 3oure counseilours acorden þerto or no. [2397] þen schalt þou considere what þing schal folwe of here counseilinge. as hate pees werre grace profyt other damage and many oþer þinges [2398] And in alle þinges þou schalt chese þe beste and weyfe alle oþer þinges [2399] ¶ Thenne schalt þou considere of what roote it is engendred þe matier of þin counseil and what fruyt it may conceyue and engendre [2400] þou schalt eek considre alle þese causes for þe whiche þey ben spronge [2401] ¶ and whan 3e haue examyned 3oure counseil as I haue sayde and which partie is þe bettre and more profitable and hast aproued it by many wise folk and olde [2402] þanne schalt þou considere if þou mayst performe hit and make of hit a good ende [2403] ¶ For certes reson̄ wol nou3t þat any man schal begynne a þing but if he mighte performe hit as him ow3te [2404] ¶ Ne no wight schulde

taken vpon him so heuy a charge þatˢ he mighte [not] bere itˢ [2405] ¶ For þe prouerbe saiþ he þatˢ to mochel enbraceþ distreyneþ litel [2406] ¶ And Catoñ saiþ ¶ Assay such þingˢ as þou hastˢ power to done leste þe charge oppresse þe to sore þatˢ þe bihoueþ to weyue þingˢ þatˢ þou hastˢ bygonne [2407] ¶ And ifˢ so be þatˢ þou be in doute. wher þou maistˢ *per*forme a þingˢ or non: chese raþer for to suffre þan for to bygynne [2408] ¶ And Pieres alphouns saith Ifˢ þou hastˢ mightˢ to don a þingˢ ofˢ which þou mostˢ repente it is bettre [. . . . . [2409] . . . . . *no gap*] halde þi tunge [1]stille þan for to speke [2410] ¶ Then may I vnderstonde by strenger resouns þatˢ ifˢ þou hastˢ power to *per*forme a werkˢ ofˢ which þou schaltˢ repente þe ¶ Thenne is itˢ bettre þatˢ þou suffre þan bygynne [2411] wel seyn þey þatˢ defenden eu*er*y wightˢ to assaye a þingˢ ofˢ which he is in doute wher he may *per*forme it or non [2412] ¶ And aft*er* when ȝe haue examynd ȝoure coñseiłł as I haue sayd biforn and knowe wel þatˢ ȝe may *per*-forme ȝoure emprise: conferme it þenne sadly til it be atˢ an ende

[2413] ¶ Now is itˢ resoñ and tyme þatˢ I schewe ȝou whenne and where-fore þatˢ ȝe may chaunge ȝoure counsel-o*ur*s wiþouten ȝoure reprofe [2414] ¶ Soþly man may chaunge his purpos and his counseiłł ifˢ þe cause cesseth or whan a newe cause betydeþ [2415] ¶ For þe lawe seiþ vpon þinges þat newely betyden bihoueþ newe coñseiłł [2416] ¶ And Senekˢ saiþ ¶ Ifˢ þin counseil come to þe eeres ofˢ þin enemys: chaunge þi coñseiłł [2417] [*Après, l'en peut changier son conseil*] ifˢ so be þou fynde þatˢ by errour or by ony oþer cause harme or damage may betyde [2418] ¶ Also ofˢ þin counsel be dishoneste oþer elles come ofˢ dishoneste cause: chaunge þin counsel [2419] ¶ For þe lawe saiþ/ þatˢ alle bihestes þatˢ ben dishoneste ne ben ofˢ no value.

[2420] and eek^{t} if^{t} so be þat^{t} it be impossible oþer may nouȝt^{t} gladly be performed oþer kepte

[2421] And take þis for a general reule / þat euery counsel þat^{t} is enformed so strongly þat^{t} it^{t} may nought^{t} be chaunged for no condicioñ þat^{t} may betyde: I say þat^{t} ilke coñsel is wicked.

[2422] ¶ Melibeus whan he hadde herd þe doctrine of^{t} his wijf^{t} dame prudence: he answerde in þis wyse. [2423] Dame quod he as ȝet^{t} vnto þis tyme ȝe han wel taught^{t} me as in generalle how I schal gouerne me and in þe chesyng^{t} and in þe wiþholdyng^{t} of my counseilours. [2424] But^{t} now wolde I fayn þat^{t} ȝe wolde condescende in special [2425] and telle me how þat^{t} likeþ ȝou or how þat^{t} semeþ ȝou by oure counseillours þat^{t} we haue chose in þis present^{t} neede

[2426] ¶ My lord quod sche I beseche ȝou in al humbles þat^{t} ȝe wolde nought^{t} wilfully reproeuen aȝein myn resoñs ne distempre ȝoure herte þough I speke þing^{t} þat^{t} ȝou displese [2427] ¶ ffor god woot^{t} as in myn entent^{t} I speke it^{t} as for þe beste for ȝoure honour and for ȝour profyt^{t} eeke [2428] ¶ And soþly I hope þat^{t} ȝoure benignite wol take it^{t} in pacience [2429] ¶ and trusteþ to me wel þat^{t} ȝoure counsel in þis cas ne scholde nouȝt^{t} as to speke proprely be called a counselynge but^{t} a mocioun or a meuyng^{t} of^{t} folye [2430] In which counseil ȝe haue herde in many a sondry wise

[2431] ¶ fferst^{t} and forþward ȝe han herd in þe assemblyng^{t} of^{t} ȝour counsellours [2432] ¶ ffor ferst^{t} ȝe schulde haue cleped [1]a fewe folk^{t} to ȝoure counseille ¶ And after þat^{t} ȝe migh^{t} haue schewed it^{t} to mo folk^{t} if^{t} it^{t} hadde be neede. [2433] But^{t} certes sodeinly ȝe han cleped to ȝoure counseil a gret^{t} multitude of^{t} poeple fulle chargaunt^{t} and ful annuyous for to heere [2434] ¶ And also ȝe haue herde furthere as ȝe schulde only haue cleped to ȝoure counselle ȝoure trewe frendes olde & wise [2435] ¶ ȝe han cleped also straunge folk^{t} ȝong^{t} folk^{t} fals flaterers and enemys

reconsiled and folk' þat don 3ou reuerence wiþouten loue / [2436] and eek' also 3e haue herd for 3e han brought wiþ 3ou to 3oure counseil. Ire. coueytise and hastines [2437] þe whiche þre þinges ben contrary to eu*er*y good counseil and honest' & profitable [2438] þe whiche þre þinges 3e han nou3t' anyntesched o*þer* destruyed hem ney*þer* in 3oure self' ne in 3oure / counceillours as 3e aughte [2439] ¶ 3e han herde also for 3e han schewed to 3oure counseillours 3oure talent' 3oure affeccioñ to make werre anon for to do vengeaunce [2440] And þey haue aspied by 3oure wordes to what' þing' 3e ben enclyned [2441] ¶ and þ*er*fore haue þey ra*þ*er counseled 3ou to 3oure talent' þan to 3oure p*ro*fyt' [2442] 3e han herde also for seme*þ* it / suffice*þ* to han ben counceled by þis counceillo*ur*s oonly and wiþ litel auyse [2443] where as in so grete and in so heih a neede it' ha*þ* be necessarye mo counselo*ur*s and mo deliberacioñs to parforme 3oure emprise [2444] ¶ 3e han herd also for 3e han herd nought' 3oure counsel in þe forseyde manere ne in dewe man*er*e as þe cas requyre*þ* [2445] ¶ 3e haue herd also for 3e haue maad no dyuysioñ betwixe [. . . . . *no gap*] 3oure trewe frendes and 3oure feyned coñcelo*ur*s [2446] ¶ Ne 3e haue nou3t' knowe þe wille of' 3oure trewe freendes olde and wise. [2447] but' 3e haue cast' alle here wordes in an hoche potte and enclyned 3oure herte to þe more part' and to þe grettere nombre [. . . . . [2448] . . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] of fooles þenne of' wise men. [2449] ¶ And þerfore þe counselynge þat' ben at congregacioñs and multitudes of' folk' þer as men take more reward to þe nombre þen to Sapience of p*er*sones: [2450] 3e seen wel þat in suche councelynges fooles haue þe maystrie [2451] ¶ Melybe answerde and sayde a3ein I g*ra*unte wel þat' I haue herd [2452] ¶ But' þer as þou hast' tolde me þer biforn þat' he nys nought' to blame þat chaunge*þ* his coun-

ceiloures for certein caas and for certein and iuste cause [2453] I am al redy to chaunge myne counceilours right' as þou woldest' deuyse [2454] ¶ ffor þe prou*er*be saith þat' for to don synne is mannyssch But' certes for to p*er*seueren longe in synne is werkes of' þe deuel.

[2455] [1]To þis sentence answered anon dame Prudence and sayde. [2456] examyneþ q*uod* sche 3oure coñselle and let' vs se þe which of' he*m* haþ spoke more resonably and taught' 3ou best' coñseil [2457] ¶ And for as moche as þat' examinac*i*on is necessary. let' vs begynne at' surgiens and at phisiciens þat' first' spaken of' þis matiere [2458] ¶ I say þat' Phisiciens & surgiens haue sayd 3ou in 3our*e* coñsel discretly as hem oughte [2459] & in here speche sethens ful wisly þat' to þe office of' hem apperteyneþ to don to eu*er*y wight' hono*ur* and p*ro*fyt' and nou3t' for to ennoye [2460] and after here crafte to don gret' diligence vnto þe cure of' hem whiche þat' þey haue in here gou*er*naunce [2461] and s*ir* right' as þey han answered wisly and discretly: [2462] Right' so rede I þat' þey ben heighly and sou*er*eynly guerdount' for here noble speche [2463] and eek' for þey schullen more do þe ententyf' busynes in þe curacioñ of' þin dought*er* deere [2464] ¶ ffor al be it so þat' þei ben 3our*e* freendes: þ*er*fore schuln 3e nou3t' suffre þat' þey serue 3ou for nought [2465]. ¶ But' 3e aughte þer after guerdoñ hem and payen hem here largesse [2466] ¶ and as touchynge þe p*ro*porcioñ which þat' þe phisiciens encreseden in þis caas ¶ This is to sayn [2467] þat' in maladyes is þat' a cont*ra*ry is warisshed by anoþ*er* cont*ra*rie [2468] ¶ I wolde fayn knowe how 3e vnderstode þilke text' and what' is 3our*e* sentence [2469] ¶ Certes q*uod* Mellibe*us* I vnderstande it in þis wise. [2470] Right' as þey haue done me a cont*ra*ry: so schuld I don hem anoþ*er* [2471] ¶ ffor right' as þey haue venged hem vpon me: and don me wrong': Right' so wol I venge me vpon hem

and don hem wrongꝫ [2472] and þenne haue I cured a contrary by anoþer

[2473] ¶ lo lo q*uod* dame prudence how lightly is eu*er*y man enclyned to his owne desir to his plesaunce [2474] ¶ Certes q*uod* sche þe wordes ofꝫ þe phisicien ne schulde nouȝtꝫ be vnderstande in þatꝫ wise [2475] ffor certes wikkednesse is nouȝtꝫ cont*ra*ry to wickednes ne vengeance is nouȝtꝫ contrary to vengaunce ne wrongꝫ to wrongꝫ [*mais sont semblables*. [2476] *Et pour ce, vengence par vengence, ne injure par injure, n'est pas curé* (Men. i. 206-7)] [2477] Butꝫ eu*er*y ofꝫ hem encreseþ and engreggeþ oþ*er* [2478] ¶ Butꝫ certes þe wordes ofꝫ þe phisicien schullen ben vnderstonde in þis wise [2479] ¶ ffor good and wickednesse ben tuo cont*ra*rious ¶ And pees and werre vengeañce and sufferañce discord and acord and many oþer þinges [2480] ¶ Butꝫ certes wickednesse schal ben y-warisched by goodnes. discord by acord. werre by pees and so forþ and oþer þinges [2481] ¶ And herto acordeþ seintꝫ Poule þe appostel and in many place [2482] he saiþ ¶ Ne ȝeldeþ nouȝtꝫ harm for [1] harm ne wicked speche [*pour mesdit*] [2483] Butꝫ do wel to hem þatꝫ don þe harme and blesse hem þatꝫ saiþ to þe harme [2484] And many oþer places he amonysscheþ pees and acord [2485] ¶ Butꝫ now wol I speke ofꝫ þe counseil which was y-ȝoue vnto ȝou by men ofꝫ lawe þe wise folkꝫ and olde folkꝫ [2486] þatꝫ sayden all*e* by on acorde as ȝe haue herde biforn [2487] ¶ Thatꝫ ou*er* all*e* þinges ȝe schullen don ȝoure diligence to kepe ȝoure p*er*sone and to warmstore ȝoure hous [2488] ¶ And þay sayden also þatꝫ in þis caas ȝe oughten to wirchen ful avisily and wiþ gretꝫ deliberacioñ [2489] ¶ And s*ir* as to þe first poyntꝫ þatꝫ toucheþ vnto þe kepyngꝫ ofꝫ ȝoure p*er*sone [2490] ȝe schullen vnd*er*stande þatꝫ he þatꝫ haþ werre schal euermore deuoutely and mekely preyen biforn all*e* þinges [2491] þatꝫ Ih*esus* cristꝫ ofꝫ his m*er*cy wole

 [1 leaf 224, back]

haue him in his *pro*teccioñ and ben his souerein helpynge at' his neede [2492] ffor certes in þis world nys no wigħt' þat' may be counseled ne kepte sufficiauntly wiþ-outen þe kepyng' of' oure lord ih*esus* crist' [2493] To þis sentence accordeþ þe p*ro*phete dauid þat' saiþ. [2494] If' god ne kepe þe cite in ydel wakeþ he þat' it' kepeþ [2495] ¶ Now s*ir* þenne schulle ȝe quyte þe kepyng' of' ȝoure p*er*sone to ȝoure trewe frendes þat' ben ap*ro*ved and y-knowe [2496] and of' hem schuln ȝe asken helpe ȝoure p*er*sone for to kepe ¶ ffor Catoñ saiþ ¶ If' þou hast' neede of helpe: aske it' of' þin frendes [2497] ffor þer nys non so good a phisicien as þin trewe freend [2498] and aft*er* þis þenne schulle ȝe kepe ȝou fro all*e* str*a*unge folk' and fro lyeres And haue alway in suspecte here companye [2499] ¶ ffor pieres alphouns saiþ ¶ Ne take no companye by þe way of' str*a*unge man but it so be þou haue knowe him of' lengere tyme. [2500] and if' so be þat' he falle in to þin company p*er*-aduentur*e* wiþouten þin assent' [2501] enquere þenne as subtilly as þou canst' of' his conu*er*sacioñ and of' his lyf' byfore and feyne þy way seynge þou woldest' go þider as þou woldest' nouȝt go. [2502] and if' he bereþ a spere holde þe on þe rigħt' syde of' him. and if' he bereþ a swerde holde þe on þe left' syde of' him. [2503] and þenne schul ȝe kepe ȝou wisly fro all*e* such manere of' poeple as I haue sayde ȝou here bifore and hem and here coun-sel eschewe [2504] And after þis þenne schulle ȝe kepe ȝou in such man*er*e [2505] þat' for any p*re*sumpcioun) of' ȝoure bodily strengþe þat' ȝe ne dispise nougħt' ne accounte nouȝt þe migħt' of' ȝoure adu*er*sary so lyte þat' ȝe lete þe kepynge of' ȝour*e* p*er*sone for ȝoure p*re*sumpcioñ [2506] ffor eu*er*y wysman dredeþ his enemy [2507] ¶ And Salamon saiþ wel fool is he þat' of' al haþ drede [2508] ¶ ffor [1] certes he þat' þurgħ hardynesse of' his herte and þurgħ þe hardynes of' hi*m*self' haþ so gret' p*re*sumpcioñ him schal yuele betyde [2509] ¶ Thenne

schuln ȝe euermore encountrewayte enbusschementȝ and alle espyaile. [2510] ffor as saiþ þe wise man [. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] [2511] he ne falleþ in to no periles þat' periles eschewеþ [2512] ¶ And al be it/ so þat' þou seme þat' þou be in secre place ȝet' schalt' þou alwey don diligence in the kepynge of' þin persone [2513] þis is to say. Ne be nouȝt' necligent' to kepe þin persone nought' only fro þin grettest' enemy. but' only fro þin leste enemy [2514] Senek' saiþ a man þat' is wel auysed he dredeþ his leste enemy [2515] Ovide seiþ þat' þe lytel wesel wol sle þe grete bole and þe wilde hert' [2516] And þe prouerbe saiþ þat' a luytel þorne may greeue a king' ful sore ¶ And a litel hound wol holde þe wilde bore [2517] ¶ But' naþeles I say nought' þou schalt' be so coward þat' þou doute wher as is no drede [2518] ¶ The bok' saiþ that' some men haue gret' lust' to disceyue but' ȝit' þey drede to be desceyued [2519] [. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] And kepe þe fro þe company of' Scorners [2520] ¶ ffor þe book' saiþ þat' scorners ne makeþ no companye but' flee here word as venym

[2521] ¶ Now as to þe secounde poynt' where as ȝoure wise counceilours counseiled ȝou to warmstore ȝoure houses wiþ gret' diligence [2522] ¶ I wolde fayn knowe how þat' ȝe vnderstande þilke wordes and what' is ȝoure sentence.

[2523] Mellibeus answerde and sayde Certes I vnderstande in þis wise þat' I schal warmstore myn hous wiþ toures suche as haue castelles and oþer maner of' edifices & armure and archers [2524] betwen which þing' if' I may my persone and myn hous so kepe and defende þat' myn enemys schuln be in drede myn hous for to approche.

[2525] to þis sentence answerde anon prudence warnysshing' quod sche of' heihe toures and of' heihe edifices appertyneþ somtyme to pryde [2526] And eek' men make heihe toures [*et les grans édifices à grant travail et à grans*

despens, et quant elles sont faites, elles ne vallent riens se elles ne sont defendues par sages et par bons amis loyaux, et à grans missions (Le Ménagier, i. 209)] [2527] ¶ And vnderstande wel þat' þe grettest' and þe strengest' garnysoñ þat' riche man may haue / as wel to kepen his persone and his goodes is [2528] þat' he [be] biloued
¶ Tullius wiþ his subiectes and with his neihebours [2529] ¶ ffor þus saiþ Tullius That' *þer* is a man*er* garnysoñ þat' no man may venquysschen ne discomfite and þat' is [2530] a lord to be loued of' his citezeins and of' his poeple

[2531] ¶ Now sire as to þe þridde poynt' where as 3oure olde and wise counseiloures sayden ¶ þat' 3ou ne oughte nou3t' sodeinly ne hastely proceden in þis neede [2532] But' þat' 3e oughten purueyen and apparayle 3ou in þis caas wiþ gret' diligence and with gret' deliberacioñ [2533] ¶ Trewely I trowe þat' þay sayden right' wisly
¶ Tullius. and right' soþ [2534] ¶ ffor Tullius saiþ In eu*er*y neede er þou begynne it app*ar*ayle þe with gret' diligence. [2535] þenne say I þat in vengaunce takyng' in werre in [1]bataille and in warnestoringe [2536] er þou bygynne ¶ I rede þat þou apparayle þe þer to ¶ And do it' wiþ gret' deliberacioñ [2537] ¶ ffor
¶ Tullius. Tulli*us* saiþ. þat' lange apparaylinge biforn þe bataile
¶ Cassidorus makeþ schort' victory [2538] ¶ And Cassidorus saiþ þe garnysoñ is strenger whan it' is long' tyme avised

[2539] But' now lete vs speke of' þe counseil þat' was acorded by oure neyheboures suche as don 3ou reuerence wiþouten loue [2540] 3oure olde enemys reconsiled ¶ 3oure flaterers [2541] þat' counceleden 3ou certeyn þinges p*ri*uely and openly counseileden 3ou þe contrarie [2542] ¶ The 3onge folk' also þat' counseiled 3ou to vengen 3ou and to maken werre anon. [2543] ¶ And certes sire as I haue sayde byforn: 3e haue gretly y-erred to han y-cleped suche maner of' folk' to 3oure counsell*e* [2544] ¶ Whiche counseiloures / ben ynough reproued by þe resoñs aforn sayde [2545] ¶ But' naþeles let' vs now descende to

þe special 3e schuln ferst' proceden after þe doctrine of' Tullius [2546] ¶ Certes the trouþe of' þis matier eyþer of' þis counseil nedeþ not' diligently enqueren [2547] ¶ ffor it' is wel wiste whiche þey ben þat' doon 3ou þis trespas & vilenye [2548] and how many trespasoures and in what' manere þey han don to 3ou al þis wronge and alle þis vilanye [2549] ¶ And after þis þanne schullen 3e examine 3e secounde condicioñ þe which þat' Tullius addeth in þis matiere [2550] ¶ ffor Tullius putteþ a þing' which þat' he clepeþ consentynge þis is to say [2551] who ben þay and whiche ben þay and how many þat' consenten to þin counseil in þin willefulnesse to don hasty vengeance [2552] ¶ And let' vs concidre also who ben þay and how many ben þay [. . . . . *no gap*] þat' consenten to 3oure aduersaries [2553] And certes as to þe ferste poynt ¶ hit' is wel knowen whiche ben þay þat' consenten to oure hastyf' wilfulnesse [2554] ¶ ffor trewely alle þo þat' counselen 3ou to maken sodeyn werre ne ben nought' 3oure frendes [2555] ¶ let' se now whiche ben þey þat' 3e holden so gretly 3oure frendes as to 3oure persone [2556] ¶ ffor al be it' so þat' 3e ben mighty and ryche: certes 3e ben but' allone [2557] ¶ ffor certes 3e ne han no childe but' a doughter [2558] ne 3e han no breþeren ne cosyns germayns ne non oþer neih kynrede [2559] ¶ Wherfore 3oure enemys scholden stinte to plede wiþ 3ou ne to destruye 3oure persone. [2560] 3e knowen also þat' 3oure richesse moot' ben dispended in diuerse partyes [2561] & when þat' euery wight' haþ his parte: þey woln take but' litel rewarde to vengen þy deþ [2562] ¶ But' þin enemys ben þre and þey haue many children breþeren cosyns and oþer neyh kynrede [2563] ¶ And þough so were þat' þou haddest' slayn of' hem two oþer .iij. 3et' dwellen þere ynowe to [1] awreken here deþ and to slen þin persone [2564] ¶ And þeih so be þat' 3oure kynrede be more siker and stedefast' þen

þe kyn of' 3oure adu*er*sary [2565] ¶ 3et' neuer þe les 3oure kynrede is but' after kynrede þey ben but' litel sibbe to 3ou [2566] ¶ And þe kyn of' 3oure enemys ben neigħ sibbe to hem ¶ And certes as in þat' he condicioñ is bettre þen is 3oures [2567] ¶ þenne let' vs consideren also of' þe counseilynge of' hem þat' counseleden 3ou to taken sodeyn vengeañce whe*þer* it' acorde to resoñ or non. [2568] and certes 3e knowen wel nay. [2569] ffor as by rigħt' and resoñ þer may no man take vengaunce of' no wigħt ¶ But' þe Iugge þat' haþ Iurdixioñ of' hit [2570] whan it' is gr*a*unted him to take þilke vengeaunce hastely or attemp*er*elly as þe lawe requyreþ [2571] ¶ And 3et' more ouer of' þilke worde þat' Tullius clepeþ consenting': [2572] þou schalt' consente if' þin mighte & þin power may consente and suffice to þin wilfulnesse and to þin counseiloures [2573] ¶ And certes þou mayst' wel say þat' nay [2574] ¶ ffor sikerly as for to speken pr*o*prely we may do no þing' but' oonly such þing' as we may doon rightfully [2575] ¶ And certes rightfully ne may 3e take no vengaunce as of' 3oure pr*o*pre auctorie [2576] ¶ Then may 3e seen þat' 3oure power ne co*n*senteþ nou3t' ne acordeþ nou3t' w*ith* 3our willefulnesse [2577] Now lete vs examine þe þridde poynt' þ*at'* Tullius clepeþ co*n*sequent [2578] Thou schalt' vnderstanden þat' þe vengaunce þat' þou pur*p*osest' for to take is consequent' [2579] And þ*er*fore falleþ anoþ*er* vengaunce. P*er*il. and werr*e* and oþre damages w*ith*out*en* nombre of' whiche we ben nou3 warre as at' þis tyme [2580] ¶ And as touchinge þe forþe poynt/. þat Tulli*us* clepeþ engendrynge [2581] ¶ þou schalt' considere þat' þis wrang' which þat' is don to þe is engendred of' þe hate of' þin enemys [2582] and of' þe vengeañce takynge ¶ And vpon þat' wolde engendre anoþ*er* vengeañce and mochel sorwe and wastyng' of' richesse as I sayde er

[2583] ¶ Now s*ir* as touchinge to þe poynt' þat Tullius clepeþ causes which þat' is þe laste poynt [2584] ¶ Thou

schalt' vnderstande þat' þe wrong' þat' þou hast' receyued haþ certein causes [2585] whiche þat' clerkes clepen Oriens et' Officiens and causa longinqua and causa p*r*opinq*ua* ¶ This is to sayn þe ferre cause [*et la prouchaine ;* [2586] *la loingtaine est Dieu qui est cause de toutes causes* [2587] *la prouchaine est tes trois ennemis* (Le Mén. i. 212)] [2588] accidental was hate [2589] The causes material ben þe .v. woundes of' þin dou3t*er* [2590] ¶ The cause formale is þe maner of' here worchinge þat' brou3ten laddres and clomben in at' þine wyndowes / [2591] ¶ The cause final was for to slee þin dou3ter it' latted nought' in as moche as in hem was [2592] ¶ But' for to speken of' þe ferre cause as [1]what' ende þey schullen come Or what' schal betyden of' hem in þis caas ne can I nou3t' deeme . but' by coniectyng' and by supposynge [2593] ffor we schuln suppose [*qu'ils avendront*] to a wicked ende. [2594] by cause þe book' of' decrees saith ¶ Selden or wiþ gret' peyne ben causes brou3t' to an ende when þey ben baldly bygonne

[2595] Now *sir* if' men asked me why þat' 3e suffren men to don 3ou þis vilenye Certes I can not' wel answere as for no soþfastnes [2596] ffor þe appostel saiþ þat' þe sciences and þe Iuggementz of' oure lord god ben mighty and deepe [2597] ¶ Ther may no man c*om*pr*e*hende ne serche hem sufficiently [2598] ¶ Naþeles by certeins p*re*sumpcioñs & coniectynges I halde and bileeue [2599] þat' god þat is ful of' Iustice and of' rightwisnesse haþ suffred þis bytyde by iuste cause resonable

[2600] ¶ þin name is mellibe þis is to say a man þat' drinkeþ hony [2601] ¶ Thou hast y-drunke so meche hony of' þe swete temp*e*rel richesses and delices & honures of' þis world [2602] þat' þou art' drunken and hast' forʒeten oure lord ihu crist' þin creatour [2603] ¶ Thou hast' nou3t' don to him such hono*ur* as þe oughte [2604] ¶ Ne þou hast' nou3t' wel take heede to

þe wordes of Ovide þat saiþ [2605] vnder þe hony of þe goodes of þin body is hyd þe venym þat sleeþ þe soule [2606] ¶ And Salomon saiþ ¶ If þou hast founden hony ete of hit what sufficeþ [2607] ¶ ffor if þou ete of hit out of mesure / þou schalt spewe and be needy and pore [2608] ¶ And peraduenture crist hath þe in spite and haþ turned away fro þe his face and his eres of misericorde [2609] and also he haþ suffred þat þou hast ben y-punyssht/ in þe maner þat þou hast y-trespast [2610] ¶ Thow hast don synne azeins oure lord ihu crist [2611] ¶ ffor certes þe þre enemys of mankynde þat is to say þe fleissch. þe ffeend. and þe worlde [2612] ¶ þou hast suffred hem to entre in þin herte wilfully by þe wyndowes of þy body [2613] and hast nouzt defended þe sufficeantly azeins here defautes and here temptacioñs So þat þay haue wounded þi soule in fyue place. [2614] ¶ this is to sayn þe deedly synnes þat ben entrede in to þin herte by þine .v. wittes [2615] And in þe same manere oure lord ihesu crist haþ and wolde and haþ suffred þat þine þre enemys ben entred in to þin hous by þe wyndowes [2616] and han wounded þine doughtres in þe forseyde manere

[2617] ¶ Certes quod Mellibe I se wel þat þat 3e enforce 3ou mochel by wordes to ouercome me in such a manere þat I schal now vengen me of myn enemys [2618] Schewynge me þe periles and þe eueles þat mighten falle of þis vengeañce [2619] ¶ But who so wolde considere in alle vengañces [1] þe periles and eueles þat mighte sewe of vengañce takynge: [2620] a man wolde neuere take vengañce and þat were harme: [2621] ffor by þe vengaunce takynge ben þe wickede men disseuered fro þe goode men [2622] ¶ And þo þat han wille to don wickednesse restreynen here wickede purpos whan þey seen þe punysschyng and þe chastysing of trespasours

[2623] [And to this answered dame Prudence: 'Certes,' said she, 'I grant you that from vengeance come many

benefits as well as many evils: [2624] yet vengeance belongeth not to "a singuler persone," but only to the judges, and to those who have jurisdiction over evil-doers.'] [2625] ¶ And ȝitꝰ say I more þatꝰ rightꝰ as a singuler *per*sone synneþ in takinge vengañce ofꝰ anoþ*er* man: [2626] Rightꝰ so synneþ þe Iugge ifꝰ he take no vengañce of he*m* þatꝰ itꝰ han desserued // [2627] ffor Senekꝰ saiþ þus þatꝰ mayster is good þatꝰ reproeueþ schrewes [2628] ¶ And as Cassidory saiþ. A man dredeth to don outrages: whan he wootꝰ and knoweþ þatꝰ itꝰ displeseþ þe Iuge and þe sou*er*aignes [2629] ¶ And anoþ*er* saiþ þe Iugge þatꝰ dredeth do don rigħtꝰ makeþ schrewes [2630] ¶ And seintꝰ Poul þe appostel saiþ in his epistle whan he writeþ vnto þe Romayns thatꝰ þe Iuges beren nougħt þe spere wiþouten cause. [2631] butꝰ þay beren it to punysschen þe schrewes and þe mysdoers and for to defende þe goode men [2632] ¶ Ifꝰ ȝe woln þenne take vengañce ofꝰ ȝoure enemys: ȝe schuln retourne or haue ȝoure recours to þe Iuge þatꝰ haþ þe Iurdexioñ vpon him [2633] & he schal punyssche hem as þe lawe axeþ and requyreþ

[2634] ¶ A q*uod* Mellibe þis vengañce likeþ me noþingꝰ [2635] ¶ I beþinke me now how fortune haþ norisched me fro my childhode and haþ holpen me to passe many a str*au*unge pas [2636] ¶ Now wol I assayen here trowynge w*ith* goddes grace and helpe þatꝰ sche schal helpe me my schame for to venge

[2637] ¶ Certes q*uod* Prudence ifꝰ ȝe woln worche by my counseille: ȝe schuln nouȝt assaye fortune by no way. [2638] Ne ȝe schuln noughtꝰ lene ne borwe vnto hire after þe word ofꝰ Senekꝰ [2639] ffor þing*es* þatꝰ ben folily doon and þatꝰ ben in hope ofꝰ ffortune schuln neu*er*e come to a good ende [2640] ¶ and as þe same senekꝰ seiþ ¶ The more clere and þe more schynynge þatꝰ fortune is: þe more brutel and þe sonnere y-broke sche is [2641] ¶ trusteþ nouȝtꝰ in hir*e* for sche nys noþingꝰ stedefastꝰ ne stable [2642] ffor when þou trowestꝰ to be mostꝰ siker or seure ofꝰ hire

helpe: sche wol fayle þe and disceyue þe [2643] ¶ And wher as ȝe sayn þat fortune haþ norisshed ȝou fro ȝoure childhode [2644] I say ȝou þat in so mochel schuln ȝe þe lasse trusten in hire and in hire witte [2645] ¶ ffor Senek saiþ that what man is norisched by fortune: sche makeþ him to gret a fool [2646] ¶ Now þenne seþens ȝe desire and aske vengañce ¶ And þe vengañce þat is doon after þe lawe and biforn þe Iugge ne likeþ [1]ȝou nought [2647] and þe vengañce þat is don in hope of fortune is perilous and vncerteyn [2648] ¶ Thenne haue ȝe non oþer remedye but for to haue ȝoure recours vnto þe souer*a*ign Iuge þat venge*þ* all*e* vilanyes and wronges [2649] ¶ And he schal venge ȝou after þat þin self witnesseþ [. . . . .] [2650] leueþ þe vengañce to me and I schal don hit

[2651] ¶ Mellibe answerde ¶ If I ne venge me nouȝt of þe wrong þat men han doon to me [2652] ¶ I schal sompne or warne hem þat han don þis vilanye to me and all*e* oþre to don me anoþ*er* vilanye [2653] ¶ ffor it is writen ¶ If þou take no vengañce of an olde vilanye: þou sompnest þin aduersarie to don þe a newe vylanye [2654] [*Et aiñsi, par souffrir l'en me feroit tant de villenies de toutes pars*] þat I mighte neyþer bere it ne sustene [2655] and so schulde I be ou*er*sette and halden ou*er* lowe [2656] ¶ ffor men sayn ¶ In mochil suffrynge schullen many þing*es* falle vnto þe whiche þou schalt not mowe suffre

[2657] ¶ Certes quod Prudence I gr*a*unte þat ouer mochil suffrañce / is nought good [2658] ¶ But ȝet ne folweþ it nouȝt þer-of þat eu*er*y p*er*sone to whom men don vilanye take of it vengañce [2659] ffor þat app*er*teneþ and longeþ al only to þe Iuges ffor þey schuln venge þe vilenyes and þe iniuries [2660] and þ*er*fore þo tuo auctoritees þat ȝe han sayde aboue ben oonly vnderstanden in þe Iuges [2661] ¶ ffor whan þey suffren ouer mochil þe wronges and vilanyes ben don

wiþouten punysschinge [2662] þay sompne nouȝt a man only for to do newe wronges but' þay comaunden it' [2663] ¶ Also a wise man saiþ þat' þe Iuge þat' correcteþ nouȝt þe synnere comaundeþ and biddeþ him to do synne [2664] ¶ And þe souerains and þe Iuges / mighten in here lande so mochel suffren of' þe schrewes and mysdoers [2665] þat' þey schulden by such suffraunce / by proces of' tyme wexen of' suche power and mig̃ht' þat' þey schulde putte oute þe Iuges and þe soueraignes from here places [2666] and at' þe laste maken hem leesen here lordschipes

[2667] ¶ But' let' vs now putte þat' ȝe han leue to vengen ȝou [2668] ¶ If' ȝe ben nouȝt' of' mig̃ht' and power as now to vengen ȝou [2669] ffor if ȝe woln maken comparisoñ vnto þe mig̃ht' of' ȝoure aduersaries ¶ ȝe schullen fynden in many þinges þat' I haue schewed ȝou ben þis þat' here condicioñ is bettre þan ȝoures [2670] ¶ And þerfore say I þat it' is good as now þat' ȝe suffre and be pacient'

[2671] ¶ fferþermore ȝe knowen þat' after þe commune sawe it is a woodnesse a man to streyne[1] aȝeins a strenger or a more mighty man þen is himself' [2672] ¶ And for to stryue wiþ a man of' euene strengþe þat' is to say [2] wiþ a strong' man as he is it' is peril [2673] ¶ And for to stryue wiþ a waykare man it' is folye. [2674] and þerfore schulde a man fle stryuyng/ as mochel as he mig̃hte [2675] ¶ As Salomon saith ¶ It' is a gret' worschipe to kepyn him fro noyse and stryf' [2676] ¶ And if' it' so bifalle or happe þat a man of' grettere mig̃ht' and strengþe þan þou art' do þe greuaunce [2677] study and busy þe raþer to stille þe same greuaunce þan for to venge þe [2678] ¶ ffor Senek' saiþ þat' he putteþ him in gret' perile þat' stryueþ wiþ a gretter man þan he is himself' [2679] ¶ And Catoun saiþ if' a man of' heyer astate or degre or more mighty þen þou do þe annoye or greuañce Suffre him [2680] for he þat' ones haþ greued þe

[1 (*margin*) stryue]

may anoþer tyme releue þe and helpe þe [2681] ¶ 3it' sette I cas 3e han boþe might' and licence to vengen 3ou [2682] I say þat' þer ben many þinges þat' schuln restreynen 3ou of' vengannce takinge [2683] and make 3ou for to encline and for to suffre and for to haue pacience in þe wronges þat' han be don to 3ou [2684] ¶ ffirste and forþward if' 3e woln concider þe defautes þat' ben in 3oure owne *per*sone [2685] for whiche defautes god haþ suffred 3ou to haue þis tribulacioñ as I haue sayde 3ou here byforn. [2686] ¶ ffor þe Poete saiþ þat' we oughten paciently taken þe tribulacioñs þat' comeþ / to vs when we þenken and consydren þat' we han disserued to han hem [2687] ¶ And seint' Gregory saiþ ¶ þat' whan a man considereþ wel þe nombre of' his defautes and of' his synnes [2688] þe peynes and þe tribulacioñs þat' he suffreþ semen þe lasse vnto him [2689] ¶ And in als mochel as him þenkeþ his synnes þe more heuy and greuous. [2690] ¶ In so moche semeþ his peyne þe lighter and þe esyer vnto him [2691] ¶ Also 3e owen to encline and to bowen 3oure herte to taken þe pacience of' oure lord Ih*es*u crist' as saiþ seint' Petre in his Epistles [2692] ¶ Ih*es*u crist' he saiþ haþ suffred for vs and 3euen ensample vnto eu*er*y man to folwe and to sewe him [2693] ffor he dede neu*er* synne ne neuere ne came a vileyns word out' of'. his mouþ [2694] when men cursed him he cursed he*m* nought' ¶ And when men beten him he manased hem nought' [2695] ¶ Also þe grece pacience whiche seintes þ*at'* ben in p*ar*adys. han had in tribulacioñs þat' þey han suffred wiþoute*n* eny desert' or gilte [2696] aughte mochel to stere 3ou to pacience [2697] [*Après, moult te doit encliner à patience*] [2698] considerynge þat' þe tribulacioñs of' þis worlde but' litel while endureþ and soone passed ben and goon [2699] ¶ And þe Ioye þat' man sekeþ to haue by pacience in tribulacioñ is p*er*durable / after þat' þe

apostel saiþ in þe epistle [2700] ¶ The ioye of god he seiþ is perdurable þat is to sayn [1] euer lastynge [2701] ¶ Also troweþ and belieueþ stedefastly þat he is nought wel ynorissht ne wel y-taught þat can nouȝt haue pacience [. . . . . *no gap*] [2702] ¶ ffor salamon saiþ þat þe doctrine of þe witte of man is knowen by pacience [2703] ¶ And in anoþer place he saiþ ¶ he þat is pacient gouerneþ him by gret prudence [2704] ¶ And ȝet Salamon saiþ þe angry and þe wraþful man makeþ noyse ¶ And þe pacient man attempereth him and stilleþ him. [2705] he saiþ also ¶ It is more worþ to be pacient þen to be right strong [2706] And he þat may haue þe lordschipe of his owne herte is more to prayse þen he þat by his force and strengþe takeþ grete cites [2707] ¶ And þerfore seiþ seint Iame in his Epistle þat pacience is a gret vertu of perfection

[2708] ¶ Certes quod Mellibe I graunte ȝou dame Prudence and pacience is a gret vertu of perfecciō [2709] ¶ But euery man may not haue þe perfectiō þat ȝe sechen [2710] ne I am nought of þe nombre of right parfyt men [2711] ¶ ffor myn herte may neuer ben in pees vnto þe tyme it be venged [2712] ¶ and al be it so þat it was gret peril to myn enemys to don a vilanye in takinge vengaunce vpon me [2713] ¶ ȝet token þey non heede of þe perille ¶ But fulfilleden here wikkede wille and here corage. [2714] and þerfore me þenkeþ þat men ouȝten not to reproue me þough I putte me in-to a litel peril for to auenge me [2715] ¶ And þough I do a gret excesse þat is to say þough I do a vengañce outrage by anoþer

[2716] ¶ A quod dame prudence ȝe seyn ȝoure wille and as ȝou likeþ [2717] ¶ But in no caas of þe world a man ne scholde nouȝt don outrage ne excesse for to vengen him [2718] ¶ ffor Cassidory saiþ þat as euel doþ he þat auengeþ him by outrage as he þat doþ þe

outrage [2719] and þerfore 3e schullen vengen 3ou after þe ordre of^{t} right^{t} þat^{t} is to sayn by þe lawe and [nought] by excesse ne by outrage [2720] ¶ Also if^{t} 3e woln vengen 3ou of^{t} þe outrage of^{t} 3oure adu*er*saries in o*þer* manere þenne right comaundeþ: 3e synnen [2721] ¶ Therfore saiþ Senek^{t} þat^{t} a man schal neuer vengen schrewedenesse [by schrewedenesse] // [2722] And if^{t} 3e say þat^{t} right^{t} axeþ to defende violence by violence and fightynge by fyghtynge [2723] ¶ Certes 3e say soþ when þe defens is don right^{t} anon wiþoute*n* interualle or wiþoute*n* taryenge or delay [2724] for to defenden him and nought^{t} for to vengen hi*m* [2725] ¶ And it^{t} bihoueþ þat^{t} a man putte such attemp*er*añce in his defense [2726] þat men han no cause ne matier to reproeuen him þat^{t} defendeþ him of^{t} excesse and of^{t} outrage [. . . . . *no gap.*] [2727] ¶ Par de 3e knowe wel þat^{t} 3e make*n* non deffense / as now for to defende 3ou But^{t} for to venge 3ou [2728] and so seweþ it^{t} þat 3e haue no wille to do 3oure deede attemp*er*elly [2729] and þerfore me þenkiþ [1] þat pacience is good ¶ ffor Salamon saiþ þat^{t} he þat^{t} is nought^{t} pacient^{t} schal haue gret^{t} harme

[2730] ¶ Certes q*uod* Mellibe ¶ I gr*a*unte wel þat^{t} whan a man is vnpacient^{t} and wroþ of^{t} þat^{t} þat^{t} toucheþ him nou3t^{t} and þat^{t} appertieneþ nought^{t} vnto him þough hit harme him it^{t} is no wonder [2731] ¶ ffor þe lawe saiþ þat^{t} he þat^{t} is coupable þat^{t} entermeteþ him or medeleþ him wiþ suche þing^{t} as app*er*teyneþ nou3t^{t} vnto him [2732] ¶ And Salo*mo*n saith þat^{t} he þat^{t} entremeteþ him of^{t} þe noyse or þe stryf^{t} of^{t} ano*þer* man is ylike to him þat^{t} takeþ an hound by þe eeres [2733] ¶ ffor right^{t} as he þat takeþ a str*a*unge hounde by þe eeres is o*þer*while y-byten wiþ þe hounde / [2734] Right^{t} in þe same wyse is þe resoñ þat^{t} he haue harme þat^{t} by his inpacience medleþ him of^{t} þe noyse of^{t} ano*þer* man wher as it app*er*teyneþ nou3t^{t} vnto him [2735] ¶ But^{t} 3e knowen wel þat þis dede þat

is to sayn my griefꝫ and myn disese toucheþ me rigħtꝫ neigħ [2736] and þerfore þougħ I be wroþ and impacientꝫ itꝫ is no meruaylle [2737] ¶ And sauynge ȝoure grace I can nouȝtꝫ se þatꝫ itꝫ mighte gretly harme þougħ I toke vengañce [2738] ¶ ffor I am richer and more mighty þen myn enemys ben [2739] ¶ And wel knowe ȝe þatꝫ by monye and by hauyngꝫ grete possesioñs ben alle þe þinges ofꝫ þis world gouernede [2740] ¶ And Salamon saiþ. alle þinges obeyen to moneye

[2741] ¶ Whan Prudence hadde herd hire housbande to auaunten him ofꝫ his richesse and ofꝫ his moneye and dispreysinge ofꝫ power and his aduersaries ¶ ¶ Sche spake and sayde on þis wise [2742] ¶ Certis deere sir I graunte ȝou þatꝫ ȝe ben riche and mighty [2743] ¶ And þatꝫ þe richesses ben goode to hem þatꝫ han wel y-geten hem and þatꝫ wel can vsen hem [2744] ¶ ffor rigħtꝫ as þe body ofꝫ man may nougħtꝫ lyue wiþoute þe soule ¶ No more may itꝫ lyue withouten temperele goodes [2745] and by richesse may a man geten him grace [2746] ¶ And þerfore saiþ Pamphilles Ifꝫ eny gaddes doughter he saiþ be riche. Sche may cheese he saiþ ofꝫ a þousand men [which she will for her husband [2747] and of the thousand] ¶ oon wol nougħtꝫ forsaken hire ne refusen hire [2748] ¶ And þis Pamphilles saith also ¶ Ifꝫ þou be riȝtꝫ happy ¶ þatꝫ is to say. Ifꝫ þou be rightꝫ riche þou schaltꝫ fynden a gret nombre ofꝫ felawes and frendes [2749] ¶ And ifꝫ þin fortune chaungeþ þatꝫ is ifꝫ þou wexe pore: ffare wel frendschipe and felaschipe [2750] ¶ ffor þou schaltꝫ ben allone wiþouten any companye butꝫ ifꝫ itꝫ be þe companye ofꝫ good folkꝫ [2751] ¶ And ȝitꝫ saiþ þis Pamphilles more ouer / þat þey þat ben þralle & bonde ofꝫ linage schuln ben maad worþy and noble by þe richesses. [2752] ¶ And rightꝫ so as by richesses þer comen many goodes ¶ Rightꝫ so by pouertꝫ comeþ many harmes and eueles. [2753] ffor gret pouertꝫ con-

streigneþ [1]a man to don many eueles. [2754] And þer-fore clepeþ Cassidore Pouert'. þe mooder of' ruyne [2755] þat' is to say þe moder of ouerþrowing' or fallyng' doun [2756] ¶ And þerfore saith Pieres alphouns ¶ On of' þe grettest' aduersary of' þis world is [2757] when a freo by kynde or of' birþe is constreigned by pouert' to eten þe almes of' his enemy [2758] ¶ And þe same saiþ Innocent' in oon of' his bookes. þat' sorwfulle and myshappy is þe condicioñ of' a pouere begger [2759] ¶ ffor if' he axe nought' his mete he deyeþ for hunger [2760] ¶ And if' he axe he deyeþ for schame ¶ And algates necessite constreigneþ him to axe [2761] ¶ And þerfore saiþ Salamon þat' bettre is to deye þan to haue such pouert' [2762] ¶ 3et' saiþ Sala-mon þat' bettre is to deye of' bitter deþ þan for to lyue in suche wyse [2763] ¶ By þese resoñs þat' I haue sayde vnto 3ou and by many oþer resoñs þat' I kouþe say [2764] ¶ I graunte 3ou þat' richesse ben good to hem þat' geten hem wel and to hem þat' wel vsen þe richesses [2765] ¶ And þerfore wol I schewe 3ow how 3e schuln haue 3ou [*en acquerant Richesses et en amassant icelles* (MS Reg. 19 C vii, leaf 140, back.)]

[2766] ¶ fferst' 3e schuln geten hem wiþouten gret' desire by good leysir sokyngly and nou3t' ouer hastily [2767] ¶ ffor a man þat' is to desyringe to gete richesse: abandoneþ him ferst' to þefte and to alle oþer eueles [2768] ¶ And þerfore saiþ Salamon ¶ he þat' hasteþ him ouer busyly to waxe ryche schal ben non Innocent [2769] ¶ he saiþ also þat' þe richesse þat' hastely comeþ to a man ¶ sone and lightly goþ and passeþ fro a man [2770] ¶ But' þat' richesse þat' comeþ lytel and litel waxeþ alwey and multilieþ [2771] And sir 3e schuln gete richesse ynough by 3oure witte and by 3oure trauayle vnto 3oure profyt/ [2772] and þat' wiþouten wrang' or harme doynge to ony oþer persone [2773] ¶ ffor þe lawe

saiþ þat' *þer* makeþ no man himself' ryche if' he do harm to ano*þer* wigħt' [2774] [*car la loy dit que nul ne se face riche au dommage d'autruy* (Le Ménagier de Paris, tome i. page 222)] [2775] ¶ And Tulli*us* saiþ ¶ þat' no sorwe ne no drede of' deþ ne no þing' þat' may falle vnto man' [2776] is so mochil aȝeins nature ¶ as a man to encresce his owne p*ro*fyt' to þe harme of ano*þer* man [2777] ¶ And þouȝ þe grete men and þe riche men geten richesse more lightly þen þou [2778] ȝet' schalt' þou nouȝt' ben ydel ne slowe to don þin p*ro*fyt ¶ ffor þou schalt' in all*e* wise flee ydelnesse [2779] ¶ ffor Salamon saiþ þat' ydelnesse techeþ man to don many eueles [2780] ¶ And eek' he saiþ þat' he þat' trauayleþ and busyeþ him to tylyen his lande schal eten breed [2781] but he þat' is ydel and casteþ him nought' to no busynesse ne occupacioñ schal falle in-to pouert' and deye for hunger [2782] ¶ and he þat' is ydel & slowħ can neuer fynde couenable tyme for to doon his p*ro*fyte [2783] ffor [1] þer is a v*er*sifiour þat' saiþ þat' þe ydel man excuseþ hi*m* in wynter by cause of' þe grete colde ¶ And in somer by cause of' þe grete hete [2784] ¶ ffor þise causes saiþ Catoñ ¶ wakeþ and enclyneþ ȝou nought' ou*er* mochil for to slepe ¶ ffor ou*er*moche reste norisseþ and causeþ many vices [2785] ¶ And þ*er*fore saiþ Seint' Ierom' ¶ Doþ some goode deedes þat' þe deuyl which is oure enemy ne fynde ȝou vnoccupied [2786] ¶ ffor þe deuel ne takeþ nouȝt' lightly vnto his worch-inge suche as he fyndeþ y-occupyed in goode werkes

[2787] ¶ Thenne þus ¶ In getynge riches ⁝ ȝe mosten flee ydelnesse [2788] ¶ and afterwarde ȝe schuln vse þe richesses þe whiche ȝe han geten by ȝoure witte and by ȝoure t*ra*uayle [2789] in suche a manere þat' men halden ȝou not' to scars ne to sparynge ne to fool large þat' is to say ou*er* large a spender [2790] ¶ ffor right' as men blamen an auerous man by cause of' his skarste and þinking' [2791] in þe same wyse is he to blame

þat spendeþ ouer largely [2792] ¶ And *þer*fore saiþ Catoñ ¶ vse þine riches þat þow hast y-geten [2793] in such manere þat men han no matiere ne cause to clepe þe wrecche ne chynche [2794] ¶ ffor it is gret schame to a man to haue a pou*er*e herte and a riche purse [2795] ¶ he saiþ also þe goodes þat þou haste y-geten vse hem by mesure þat is to sayn spende mesurably [2796] ¶ ffor þey þat folily wasten and dispenden þe goodes þat þey han [2797] whan þay haue no more p*ro*pre of here owne: þey schapen hem to take þe goodes of anoþ*er* man [2798] ¶ I say þanne þat he schal flee auarice [2799] vsynge 3oure richesse in suche a man*er*e that men say not þat 3oure richesses ben y-buried [2800] but þat 3e han hem in 3oure mi3ht and in 3oure weldynge [2801] ffor a wise man reproueþ þe auerous man and saiþ þus in tuo vers [2802] ¶ wherto and why burieþ a man his goodes by his auarice and knoweþ wel þat needes moste he dye [2803] ¶ ffor deþ is þe ende of eu*er*y man as in þis p*re*sent lyf [2804] ¶ And for what cause or enchesoñ ioigneþ he him or knetteþ he hem so faste vnto his goodes [2805] þat alle his wittes mowen nou3t disseueren him or dep*ar*ten him fro his goodes. [2806] and knoweþ wel or owghte to knowe þat whan he is deed he schal nou3t bere out of þe world wiþ him [2807] ¶ and þ*er*fore saiþ seint Austyn þat þe auerous man is likned vnto helle [2808] ¶ þat þe more it chewеþ þe more desir it haþ to swelwe and deuoure [2809] ¶ And as wel alle 3e wolde eschewe to ben y-cleped an auerous man or a chynche [2810] ¶ As wel schulde 3e gouerne 3ou and kepe 3ou in such a wyse þat men clepe 3ou nou3t to large [2811] ¶ þ*er*fore Tulli*us* [1]saiþ ¶ The goodes he saiþ of þin hous schulde not ben hydde ne kepte in cloos but þat þay mighte ben opened wiþ pitee and with debonairtee [2812] þat is to say to 3euen hem part þat han gret neede [2813]

GROUP **B.** § **10.** MELIBEUS. **Corpus MS.**

¶ Ne þine goodes schullen not' ben so opene to ben eu*ery* mannes goodes [2814] ¶ afterward in getynge of' 3our richesses ¶ And in vsynge hem 3e schuln alway haue þre þinges in 3oure herte [2815] [*c'est assavoir, Dieu, conscience, et bonne fame, et renommée*. [2816] *Tu dois doncques avoir Dieu en ton cuer* (Le Ménagier, i. 224)] [2817] ¶ And for no richesse 3e schuln doon no þing' þat' may be displesaunce to god þat' is 3oure creatour and 3oure maker [2818] ¶ ffor after þe word of' Salam*on* ¶ hit' is bettre to haue a luytel good wiþ þe loue of' god. [2819] þan to haue mochil good and tresour and lese þe loue of' his lord god [2820] ¶ And þe p*roph*e*te* saiþ. þat' better it is to ben a good man and haue lytel good and tresour. [2821] þan to be halden a schrewe and to haue gret' richesse [2822] ¶ 3et' say I · forþ*er*more þ*at'* 3e schuln don 3oure busynesse to geten 3ou richesse [2823] So þat' 3e geten hem wiþ good conscience [2824] ¶ And þe appostel saiþ þat' þer is no þing' in þis world of' which we schulden haue so gret' ioye: as when oure conscience bereþ vs good witnesse [2825] ¶ And þe wise man saiþ ¶ The substaunce of' a man is ful good when synne is nought in mannes co*n*science [2826] ¶ Aftirward in getyng' of' 3oure Richesses and in vsynge of' hem: [2827] 3e moste haue gret' busynesse and gret' diligence that' 3oure goode name be alwey kepte and conserued [2828] ¶ ffor Salam*on* saiþ ¶ þat' better it is and more auayleþ a man to haue good name þen to haue grete richesses [2829] ¶ And þ*er*fore he saiþ in anoþ*er* place ¶ Do gret' diligence saiþ Salamon in kepyng' of' þin frende and of' þin goode name [2830] ¶ ffor it schal lenger abyde with þe þan eny tresour be it' neuer so p*re*cious [2831] ¶ And certes he schulde nou3t' be cleped a gentil man þat' after god and good conscience alle þinges lefte þat' he ne doþ his busynesse ne diligence to kepen his good name [2832] ¶ And Cassidorie saiþ þat' it' is signe of' a good herte whan a man loueþ and desyreþ to haue a good name

GROUP **B.** § **10.** MELIBEUS. **Corpus MS.**

[2833] ¶ And þerfore seiþ seintꝫ austyn þatꝫ þer ben tuo þinges þatꝫ ben necessary and needfulle [2834] ¶ And þatꝫ is good consciens [2835] to þin owne persone inward and good loos ffor þin neyhebour outward [2836] ¶ And he þatꝫ trusteþ him so mechel in his goode conscience [2837] þatꝫ he displeseþ and setteþ itꝫ atꝫ nouȝtꝫ his good name or loos and rekkeþ nouȝtꝫ þat he kepeþ nouȝtꝫ his good name nys butꝫ a cruel cherle

[2838] ¶ Sire now haue I schewed ȝow how ȝe schuln doon in getynge ofꝫ richesse and how ȝe schuln vsen hem [2839] ¶ And I se wel þatꝫ for þe truste þatꝫ ȝe han in richesse ȝe wollen moeue bataile [1]and werre [2840] ¶ I counsele ȝou þatꝫ ȝe begynne no werre in truste ofꝫ ȝoure richesses ¶ ffor þey sufficen nouȝtꝫ werres to meyntene [2841] ¶ And þerfore saiþ a Philosophre ¶ Thatꝫ a man desireþ and wol algates han werre schal neuer haue sufficaunce [2842] ¶ ffor þe richere þatꝫ he is þe gretter despenses mootꝫ he make ifꝫ he wole haue worschipe and victory [2843] ¶ And Salamon saith þatꝫ þe grettere richesse þatꝫ a man haþ þe more dispendoures he haþ [2844] ¶ And deere *sir* al be itꝫ so þatꝫ for ȝoure richesses ȝe may han moche folkꝫ [2845] ¶ ȝetꝫ byhoueþ itꝫ noughtꝫ ne itꝫ is nouȝtꝫ good to begynne werre wher as ȝe may in oþer manere haue pees vnto ȝoure worschipe and profytꝫ [2846] ¶ ffor þe victories ofꝫ Batailles þatꝫ ben in þis world liþ nouȝtꝫ in gretꝫ nombre ofꝫ multitude ofꝫ poeple ne in þe vertu ofꝫ man: [2847] butꝫ itꝫ lith in þe wille and in þe hande ofꝫ our lord ihesu cristꝫ // [2848] And þerfore Iudas Makabeus which was goddes knightꝫ [2849] when he schulde fighten aȝeins his aduersaries þatꝫ hadde a gretter nombre & a gretter multitude ofꝫ folkꝫ and strenger þen was þe poeple ofꝫ Machabee [2850] ¶ ȝetꝫ he recomforted his litel companye and sayde rightꝫ in þis wise [2851] ¶ As lightly *quod* he may our lord god almighty ȝeue victory to fewe folkꝫ

as to many folk' [2852] ¶ ffor þe victory of' bataile comeþ nouȝt by gret' nombre of' poeple: [2853] but' it' comeþ fro oure lord of' heuene // [2854] ¶ And deere sire for as mochil as þer is no man certein if' it' be worþy þat' god ȝeue him victory [. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*] or nouȝt'. after þat' Salomon seiþ [2855] ¶ þerfore euery man schulde gretly drede werres to begynne [2856] ¶ And by cause þat' in batailles schuln fallen many periles [2857] ¶ And happeþ oþerwhile þat' as sone is þe grete man slayn as þe litel man [2858] ¶ And as it' is writen in þe secoñde book' of' kynges ¶ The deedes of' batailles ben aduenturous and vncertein [2859] ffor as lightly as is oon y-hurt' wiþ a spere as anoþer. [2860] and þerfore is gret' perile in werre ¶ Therfore schulden men flee and eschewe werre in as mechel as a man may goodly [2861] ¶ ffor Salamon saiþ ¶ he þat' loueþ perill: schal falle in perille

[2862] ¶ After þat' dame prudence hadde spoken in þis manere ¶ Mellibe answerde and sayde [2863] ¶ I se wel dame Prudence þat' by ȝoure faire wordes and by ȝoure resoñs þat' [*vous mettez avant, que*] þe werre lykeþ ȝou noþing' [2864] ¶ But' I haue not' ȝit' herde ȝoure wyse counsel how I schal do in þis neede.

[2865] Certes q*uod* sche I counseile ȝou þat' ȝe acorde wiþ ȝoure aduersaries and þat' ȝe haue pees wiþ hem [2866] ¶ ffor seint' Iame saiþ in his Epistles þat' by concord and pees þat' smale richesses waxen grete [2867] ¶ And by debat' and discord þe grete richesses fallen 'doun [2868] ¶ And ȝe knowen þat' oon of' þe grettest' and most' souerayn þing' þat' is in þis world is vnite and pees [2869] ¶ And þerfore sayde oure lord Ihesu crist' to his appostles in þis wyse [2870] ¶ Wel happy and blessed ben þay þat' louen and purchacen pees ffor þey ben cleped þe children of' god [2871] ¶ A q*uod* Mellibe now I se wel þat' ȝe louen nouȝt' myn honour ne my worschipe [2872] ¶ ȝe knowe wel þat' myn

adu*er*saries han bygonne þis debaat and brigge by here outrage [2873] ¶ And ȝe seen wel þat þey neuer queren ne preyen me nought of pees Ne þey asken me nouȝt to be recoñsilede [2874] ¶ Wole ȝe þanne þat I go meke me and obeye me to hem . and crye hem mercy: [2875] ffor soþe þat were not my worschipe [2876] ¶ ffor right as men sayn þat ouer gret homlynesse[1] engendreþ despysyng So fareþ it by to gret humilite and mekenesse [1 *corrected*]

[2877] ¶ Then bygan dame prudence to make semblaunt of wraþþe and sayde [2878] ¶ C*er*tez sire saue ȝour *grace* ¶ I loue ȝour hono*ur* and ȝour p*ro*fyt as I do my*n* owne and eu*er* haue doon [2879] ne ȝe ne noon oþer ne saugh neuer þe contrarye [2880] ¶ And ȝet if I hadde sayd ȝe schulde haue purchaced þe pees and þe reconsiliacioñ: I nad nought mochel mystaken me ne y-sayde amys [2881] ¶ ffor þe wise ma*n* saith . þe dissencioñ bygynneþ by anoþ*er* man and þe reconsilynge begynneþ by þinself [2882] ¶ And þe p*ro*phe*te* saiþ ¶ fflee schrewednesse and do goodnesse [2883] ¶ Seche pees and folwe it as mechil as in þe is / [2884] ¶ ȝet saiþ he nought ¶ ȝet schuln ȝe raþer pursewe to ȝour aduersaryes for pees þan þey schuln to ȝou [2885] ¶ ffor I knowe wel þat ȝe ben so harde y-herted þat ȝe wolen don no þing for me [2886] ¶ And Salamo*n* saiþ ¶ þat he þat haþ euer an hard herte: atte laste he schal myshappe and mystryde

[2887] ¶ Whan Mellibe hadde herde dame Prudence make semblañt of wraþþe ¶ he sayde in þis wyse [2888] ¶ Dame I p*ra*y ȝou þat ȝe ben nouȝt displesed of þinges þat I say ȝou [2889] ffor ȝe knowe wel þat I am angry and wroþ and þat is no wonder [2890] ¶ and þo þat ben wroþ witen not wel what þey doon ne what þay sayn [2891] ¶ Wherfore þe p*ro*phe*te* saiþ þat / troubled eyen han no cleer sight [2892] ¶ But sitteþ and counseileþ me right as ȝow liste . ffor I am redy to doon right as ȝe woln desire [2893] ¶ And if ȝe reproeuen me of my folye ¶ I am þe more halden to loue ȝow and to preysen

3ou [2894] ¶ ffor Salamon saiþ ¶ he þat' reproueþ him þat dooþ folye: [2895] he schal fynden grettere grace þan he þat' disceyueþ him by wordes

[2896] ¶ Then sayde dame Prudence ¶ I make no semblaunt' of' wraþþe / ne of' anger but' for 3oure owne profyt' [2897] ¶ ffor Salomon saiþ ¶ he is [1]more worþ þat reproueþ or chideþ a fool for his folye schewing' him semblañt' of' wraþþe: [2898] þan he þat' supporteþ him / [. . . . *no gap*] in his mysdoynge & laugheþ at' his folye [2899] ¶ And þis same Salomon saiþ afterward þat' by þe sorwful visage of' man þat' is to say by sory and heuy contynaunce of' a man [2900] þe folk' correcteþ and amendeþ him self'

[2901] ¶ Than sayde Mellibe ¶ I schal nou3t' konne answere vnto so many resoñs as 3e putteþ to me and scheweþ [2902] Sayeþ schortly 3our wille and 3oure counseil and I am al redy to fulfille and parforme

[2903] ¶ Thenne dame Prudence discouered al hire wille vnto him and sayde [2904] ¶ I counseile 3ou q*uod* he abouen alle þing' þat' 3e maken pees betwixen god and 3ou [2905] and beþ reconsiled vnto him and vnto his grace [2906] ¶ ffor as I haue sayde 3ou here-byforn god haþ suffred 3ou to haue þis tribulacioñ and disese for 3oure synnes [2907] and if' 3e doon as I say 3ou god wol sende 3oure aduersaries vnto 3ou [2908] and maken 3oure aduersaries fallen at' 3oure feet'. redy to doon 3our wille and 3oure comaundement [2909] ¶ ffor Salomon saiþ whan þe condicioñ of' man is plesaunt' and likinge vnto god // [2910] he chaungeþ þe hertes of' mannes aduersaries and constreigneþ hem to besechen him of' pees and of' grace [2911] ¶ And I pray 3ou let' me speke wiþ 3our aduersaries in priue place [2912] ¶ ffor þey schuln nou3t' knowe þat' it' be 3oure wille or 3oure assent' [2913] and þenne whan I knowe here wille and here assent' ¶ I may counsel 3ou þe more seurly

[2914] ¶ Dame q*uod* Mellibe doþ 3oure wille and

ȝoure likynge [2915] ¶ ffor I putte me holly in ȝoure disposicioñ and ordinañce

[2916] ¶ Thenne dame Prudence whan sche saugħ þe goode wille of hire housbonde sche delyuered and took a-vys in hire self [2917] þenking how sche mighte bringe þis neede. vnto a good conclusioñ and to a good ende [2918] ¶ And whan sche saugħ hire tyme sche sente for þe aduersaries to come vnto hire in-to a priue place [2919] and schewed wysely vnto hem þe grete goodnesse þat comeþ of pees [2920] and þe grete harmes and periles þat ben in werre [2921] ¶ And sayde to hem in a goodly manere hou þat hem ¶ aughte to haue gret repentaunce [2922] of þe Iniury and wrong þat þey hadden doon to Mellibe hire lord and vnto hire and vnto hire doughter

[2923] ¶ And when þey herden þe goode wordes of dame Prudence. [2924] þey weren so supprised and rauysscht and hadden so gret ioye of hire þat wonder was to telle [2925] ¶ A lady quod þay ȝe han schewed vnto vs þe blessyng of swetnesse after þe sawe of dauid þe prophete [2926] ¶ ffor þe reconsilyng which we ne ben nouȝt worþy to haue in no manere [2927] ¶ But we oughten requiren hit wiþ gret contricioñ & [1]humilite [2928] ȝe of ȝoure grete goodnesse han presented vnto vs [2929] ¶ Now se we wel þat þe science and þe connynge of Salamon is ful trewe. [2930] ffor he saiþ þat swete wordes multiplyen and encrescen freendes and maken schrewes to be debonaire and meeke

[2931] ¶ Certes quod þay we putten oure dede and aħ oure matiere and cause al holly in ȝoure goode wille [2932] and ben redy to obeye to þe speche of þe comaundement of my lord Mellibe [2933] ¶ And þerfore deere and benigne lady we preyen ȝou and ƀesechen ȝou as mekely as we conne and mowen [2934] þat it like vnto ȝoure grete goodnesse to fulfille in dede ȝoure goode wordes [2935] ¶ ffor we considren and knowlechen

þat we han offended and y-greued my lord Mellibe out of resoñ and mesure [2936] so ferforþ þat we be nouȝt of power to maken him amendes [2937] ¶ And þerfore we oblige vs and oure frendes for to don alle his wille and his comaundement [2938] ¶ But peraventure he haþ such heuynesse and such wraþþe to vs ward by cause of oure offense [2939] ¶ That woln enioygne vs such peyne þat we may not bere ne sustene [2940] ¶ And þerfore noble lady we beseche to ȝoure wommanly pite [2941] to taken such avisement/ in þis neede þat we ne oure freendes ne ben nouȝt disherited þurgh oure folye

[2942] ¶ Certes quod Prudence ¶ It is an hard þing and right perilous [2943] þat a man putte him al outrely in þe arbitracioñ and Iuggement and in þe might & power of his enmys [2944] ¶ ffor Salamon saiþ ¶ leeueþ me and ȝeueþ credence to þat þat I schal sayn ¶ I say yeuere peple and gouernours of holy chirche [2945] to þin sone to þin wyf [*à ton frère*] and to þin freende [2946] [*ne donne puissance sur toy en toute ta vie* [2947] *Se il a doncques deffendu que l'en ne donne . . . à frère ne à ami* (Le Ménagier, i. 230)] þe might of his body [2948] ¶ By a strenger resoñ he defendeþ and forbedeþ a man to ȝiue himself vnto his enemy [2949] ¶ And naþeles I counseile ȝou þat ȝe mystruste nouȝt my lord [2950] ¶ ffor I wot wel and knowe wel þat he is debonaire and meke large & courteys [2951] and no þing desirous of good ne coueytous to haue richesse [2952] ¶ ffor þer is no þing in þis world þat he desireþ saue worschipe and honour [2953] ¶ fforþermore I knowe wel and I am right seur þat he schal noþing do in þis neede withouten my counseil [2954] ¶ And I schal so worchen in þis cause by þe grace of oure lord god þat ȝe schuln ben reconsiled vnto vs

[2955] ¶ þenne sayden þey wiþ oo voys ¶ Worschipful

lady we putten vs and oure goodes al fully in ȝoure wille and disposicioñ [2956] and [been] redy to come whatˢ [day] ȝou likeþ vnto ȝoure noblesse to lymyten vs or to assignen vs [2957] for to maken oure obligacioñ and bond as strongˢ as itˢ likeþ vnto ȝoure goodnesse [2958] þatˢ we may fulfille þe wille ofˢ ȝou and ofˢ my lord Mellibe

[2959] ¶ Whan dame Prudence hadde herd þe answeres ofˢ þese men: sche bad hem gon ayayn pryuyly [2960] ¶ And sche [1] retourned aȝein to hire lord Mellybe and tolde him how sche fond his aduersaries ful repentauntˢ [2961] and knowlechinge ful reuerently and lowely here synnes and here trespaces and how þey weren redy to suffre alle peyne. [2962] requyrynge and preyngˢ him ofˢ mercy and pite

[2963] ¶ Thenne sayde Mellibe: he is wel worþy to haue pardoñ and forȝeuenesse [*qui ne excuse point son péchié*, [2964] *mais le recongnoist et s'en repent et demande indulgence;* [2965] *car Sénèque dit là est rémission* (Le Ménagier, i. 231)] wher as confessioñ is [2966] ¶ ffor confessioñ is neighebor to Innocence [2967] ¶ And he saith in anoþer place ¶ he þatˢ haþ schame for his synne and knowlecheþ it [. . . . . *no gap*] ¶ And þerfore I assente and conferme to haue pees [2968] ¶ Butˢ itˢ is good þatˢ we do itˢ nouȝtˢ wiþouten þe assente and wille ofˢ oure freendes

[2969] ¶ Then was Prudence rightˢ glad and Ioyeful and sayde [2970] ¶ Certes sire *quod* sche ¶ ȝe han goodly and wel answered [2971] ¶ ffor rightˢ as by counseil assent and helpynge ofˢ ȝoure frendes ȝe han ben styred to vengen ȝou and make werre: [2972] Rightˢ so wiþouten here counseil schulle ȝe noughtˢ acorde þough ȝe ne haue pees wiþ ȝoure aduersaries [2973] ¶ ffor þe lawe saith ¶ þer is no þingˢ so good by way ofˢ kynde as þingˢ to ben vnbounden by hym þatˢ it was y-bounde

[2974] ¶ And þenne dame Prudence wiþouten delay or taryinge sent anon messagers for hire kyn and for hire olde frendes whiche þat were trewe and wyse [2975]

¶ and tolde hem by ordre in þe presence of' Mellybe al þe matiere as it' is abouen exp*re*ssed and declared [2976] ¶ and p*re*yden hem þat' þey wolden yeuen hire a wyse counseill*e* ¶ what' best' were to doon in þis matiere [2977] ¶ And whan mellibeus counseil hadde taken here avys and good deliberac*i*on of' þe forsayde matiere [2978] and hadden examyned it' by gret' busynesse and gret' diligence [2979] þey 3euen ful counseil for to haue pees and reste [2980] And þat' Mellibe schulde receyue hit' with good herte of his aduersaries to for3iuenes and mercy

[2981] ¶ And whan dame Prudence hadde herde þe assent' of' hire lord Mellibe and þe counseil of' hire frendes [2982] acorded wiþ hire wille and entencioñ [2983] sche was wonderly glad in herte and sayde [2984] ¶ Ther is an olde prouerbe q*uod* sche saiþ þat' þe goodnesse þat' þu mayst' do þis day do it' [2985] and abyd it/ nought' ne delay it' nought' til to morwe [2986] ¶ And þ*er*fore I counseile þat' 3e sende 3oure messagers whiche þat' ben discrete and wise [2987] vnto 3oure adu*er*saries / tellynge hem in 3oure bihalue [2988] if' þey wolen trete of' pees and acorde [2989] þat' þey schapen hem wiþouten delay or taryynge comynge to vs [2990] ¶ which þing' p*er*formed was in dede [2991] and whan þese trespasoures and repentynge folk' of' here folyes- þat' is to say þe aduersaries of' Mellibe [2992] hadden herde what' þese messangeres [1]sayden vnto hem; [2993] þey weren ful glad and ioyfull*e* and answerden ful mekely and benygnely [2994] 3eldynge gr*a*ces and þankes to here lord Mellibe and to all*e* his companye [2995] ¶ and schopen hem wiþouten delay to go wiþ þe messangeres and obeye to þe comaundement of' here lord Mellibe

[2996] ¶ And right' anon þey token here wey to Mellibe [2997] ¶ And toke þe so*m*me of' here trewe wordes and frendes to maken feiþ for hem and for to ben here borwes [2998] ¶ And whanne þey comen to

þe p*re*sence of' Mellibe ¶ he seyde hem þese wordes [2999] ¶ It' stant' þus q*uod* Mellibe and soþ it' is þat' ȝe [3000] causeles and wiþouten skile and resoñ [3001] han don grete Iniuries and wronges to me and to my wyf' Dame Prudence and to myn doughter also [3002] ¶ ffor ȝe han entred in-to myn hous by vyolence [3003] and han doon suche outrage þat' alle men knowen wel þat' ȝe han disserued þe deþ [3004] ¶ And þerfore wil I knowen and wyten of' ȝou [3005] wheþer þat' ȝe wollen putte þe punysschement' and chastisyng' and þe vengaunce of' þis outrage in þe wille of' me and my wyf' dame Prudence or ȝe woln nouȝt'

[3006] ¶ Thenne þe wisest' of hem þre answerde for hem alle and sayde [3007] *sir* q*uod* he we knowen wel þat' we ben vnworþy to come to ȝoure court' of' so gret' a lord and of' so worþy as ȝe ben [3008] ffor we han so gretly mystaken vs and han offended and agult' in such a wise aȝeins ȝour heighe lordschipe. [3009] þat' trewly we han deserued þe deth [3010] ¶ But' ȝit' for þe grete goodnesse and debonairte þat alle þe world witnesseþ of' ȝoure p*er*sone [3011] ¶ we submitten vs to þe excellence and benignite of' ȝoure *grac*ious lordschipe [3012] and ben redy to obeye to alle ȝour comaundementz [3013] besechynge ȝou þat' of' ȝoure m*er*cyable pite. ȝe woln considre oure grete repentaunce and lowe submissioñ [3014] and to *grau*nte vs forȝeuenesse of' oure outragous trespas and offence [3015] ¶ ffor wel we knowe þat' ȝoure liberalle grace & mercy strecheþ ferþer in-to good nesse þan don oure outrageous gultes and trespaces in-to wickednesse. [3016] al be hit'. þat' cursedly and damp-nably we han gult' aȝeins ȝoure heyhe lordschipe

[3017] ¶ Thenne Mellibe took' him vp fro þe grounde ful benygnely [3018] and receyued here obligacioñs and here bandes by here oþes vppon here plegges and here borwes [3019] and assigned hem a certeyn day to retournen vnto his courtes [3020] ¶ ffor to accepte and receyue þe sentences and

þe Iuggementes þat Mellibe wolde comañde to ben don on hem by þe causes a-forn sayde / [3021] whiche þinges ordeyned: euery man retournede [1]to his hous

[3022] ¶ And when þat dame Prudence saugh hire tyme sche f[r]eyned and axede hire lord mellibe [3023] what vengañce he þouȝt to take of his aduersaries

[3024] To which mellibe answerde and sayde ¶ Certez *quod* he I þenke and purpose fully [3025] to disherite hem of al þat þay han ¶ And for to putten hem in exile for euere

[3026] ¶ Certes *quod* Dame Prudence þis were a cruel sentence and mochel aȝeins resoñ [3027] ¶ ffor ȝe ben riche ynough and han no neede of oþer mennes good [3028] and ȝe mighte lightly geten ȝou a coueytous name [3029] which is a vicious þing and oughte [be] eschewed of euery man [3030] ¶ ffor after þe sawe of þe appostel Coueitise is roote of alle harmes [3031] ¶ And þerfore it were bettre to lese so mochel good of ȝoure owne þan for to take of here good in þis manere [3032] ¶ ffor better it is to leese good wiþ worschipe þenne it is good to wynne worschipe wiþ vilanye and schame [3033] ¶ And euery man oughte to don his busynesse and to geten him a good name [3034] ¶ and ȝet schal he nouȝt only kepen him in kepyng of his good name [3035] ¶ But he schal also enforcen him alwey to don som þing by which he may renouelle his good name [3036] ¶ ffor it is write þat þe olde goode loos or good name of a man is sone goon and passed when it is nouȝt newed and renouelled [3037] ¶ And as touchinge þat ȝe sayn þat ȝe woln exile ȝoure aduersaries [3038] þat þenkeþ me mochil aȝeins resoñ and out of mesure [3039] ¶ Considereþ þe power þat ȝe han ȝouen ȝou vpon hemself [3040] and it is writen. þat he is worþy to lesen his priuilege þat misvseþ it ¶ The mighte and þe power þat is ȝouen him. [3041] And I sette caas þat ȝe mighte annoye hem þat peyne by righte and by lawe [3042] which I

trowe ȝe may nouȝt do [3043] I say ne ne mighte nouȝt putte it to execucioñ *per*auenture [3044] and þenne were it likly to retorne to þe werre as it was byforn [3045] ¶ And þerfore if ȝe woln þat men do ȝou obeissañce: ȝe moste deme more curteisly [3046] þis is to sayn ȝe moste ȝiue more esy sentences and Iugementz [3047] ¶ for it is writen þat he þat most courteisly comaundeth: to him men most obeyen [3048] ¶ And *per*fore I pray ȝou þat in þis necessite and in þis neede: ȝe casten *per*fore to ouercome ȝoure herte [3049] ¶ ffor Senek saiþ ¶ he þat oones ou*er*comeþ his herte: ouercomeþ twyes [3050] ¶ And Tullius saiþ ¶ Ther is no þing so comendable in a gret lord [3051] as whan he is debonaire and meke and appeseþ him meekely [3052] ¶ And I pray ȝou þat ȝe woln forbere now to do vengañce [3053] in such a man*er*e . . þat ȝoure goode name may be kepte and conserued [3054] and þat man may haue [1]cause and matiere to preyse ȝou of pite and of m*er*cy [3055] and þat ȝe han no cause to repente ȝou of þing þat ȝe doon [3056] ¶ ffor Senek seiþ: he ou*er*comeþ in euel manere þat repenteþ him of his victory [3057] ¶ Wherfore I p*ra*y ȝou let m*er*cy be in ȝoure herte [3058] to þeffecte and þe entent þat god almighty haue m*er*cy vpon ȝou in his laste Iuggeme*n*t [3059] [*Car saint Jacques dit en son épistre: jugement* [2]] ¶ wiþoute*n* mercy schal be to him þat haþ no m*er*cy of anoþ*er* wigħt

[3] Le Mén. i. 235]

[3060] ¶ Whan mellibe had herde þe grete skiles and resoñs of Dame Prudence and of hire wise informacioñs and techinges: [3061] his herte gan enclyne to þe wille of his wyf consyderyng to þe trewe entent [3062] con-formed him anon ¶ And assented fully to worchen after hire counseil. [3063] and þankeþ god of/ who*m* p*ro*cedeth aħ goodnesse þat him sente a wyf of so gret discrecioñ [3064] ¶ And when þe day came þat his adu*er*saries schulde apperen in his p*re*sence: [3065] he spake

 [1 leaf 234, back]

to hem ful goodly and sayde to hem in þis wise/ [3066] ¶ Al be it so þat of 3oure pruyde and by *pre*sumpcioñ and folye ¶ and of 3oure necligence and vnku*n*nynge [3067] 3e han mysborn 3ou and trespassed to me /./ [3068] 3et for as meche as I se and byholde 3oure grete humilite [3069] and þat 3e ben sory and repentaunt of 3oure gultes: [3070] it constreigneth me to do 3ou *grace* and *mercy* [3071] ¶ Wherfore I receyue 3ou vnto my grace/ [3072] and forgiue 3ou outrely all*e* þe offenses Iniuries and wronges þat 3e han doon a3eins me and myne [3073] to þis effecte and to þis ende / þat god of his endeles mercy [3074] wol at þe tyme of oure deyinge forgiuen oure gultes þat we han trespast vnto him in þis wrecchede world // [3075] ¶ ffor douteles if we ben sory and repentaunt of þe synnes and gultes þe whiche we han trespassed in þe sight of oure lord god: [3076] he is so fre and so mercyful [3077] þat he wol forgiuen vs oure gultes [3078] and bryngen vs to þilke blisse þat neuer haþ ende. To which blisse he vs bringe That blood on crosse for vs gan springe *Qui cum patre* /

¶ Here endeþ Chaucers tale of Mellibe //

¶ *Prologus* Monachi

[*on leaf 234, back*]

Whan ended was þe tale of Mellibe
And of Prudence and hire benignite
Oure hoost sayde as I am feyþful man
And By þe precious corpus Madryan
I hadde leuer þan a barel ale
That goode leef my wyf had herd þis tale
ffor sche nys no þing of such pacience
As was þis Mellibeus wyf Prudence
By goddes bones whan I bete my knaues [leaf 235]
Sche bringeþ me þe grete clobbed stanes
And cryeþ sle þe dogges eu*er*ychon
And breke boþe bak and bon
And if þat any neyghebour of myne
Wol nouȝt in chirche to my wif enclyne
Or be so hardy to hire to trespace
Whan sche comeþ home sche rumpeth me þe face
and cryeþ false coward wreke þin wyf
By corpus bones I wol haue þy knyf
And þou schalt haue my distaf and go spynne
ffro day to night right þus sche wol begynne
Allas sche saiþ þat euer I was y-schape
To wedde a melksop or a coward ape /
That wil ben ouerled wiþ eu*er*y wight
Thou darst nouȝt stonde by þy wyf aright
This is my lyf but if þat I wolde fight
And out at þe dore anon I mot me dight
Or elles I am lost but if þat I
Be like a wilde leoñ fool hardy
I wot wel sche wol do me slee som day
Som neihebore and þanne I go my way
ffor I am p*er*ilous wiþ knyf on honde /
Al be it þat I dar hire nouȝt wiþstonde /

ffor sche is bigge in armes by my feiþ
That' schal he fynde þat hire mysdoþ or seiþ
But' lat' vs passe away fro þis matiere /
My lord sire monk' he saiþ be mery of' cheere /
ffor ye schul telle a tale trewely
Lo Rouchestre stant' here faste by
Ryd forþ myn owne lord brek' nou3t' our game
But' by my trouþe I knowe nou3t' 3oure name /
Wheþer I schal calle 3ou my lord daun Iohñ
Or Daun Thom*a*s or elles Daun Alboñ
Of' what' hous be 3e by your fader kyn
I vowe to god þou hast' a ful fayr skyn
It' is a gentil pasture þer þou gost' [leaf 235]
Thou art' nou3t' like a penañt' or a gost
Vppon my feiþ þou art' som officer
Som worþy Sexteyn or som Celerer
ffor by my fader soule as to my dome
Thou art' a maister whan þou art at' home
No pouer cloysterer ne no pouer novys
But' gouernour wyly and wys
And þer-with-al of' brawnes and of' bones
A wel faryng' p*er*sone for þe nones
I p*ra*y to god 3iue him confusioñ
That' ferst' þe brou3ht' in to religioñ
Thou woldest' haue ben a tredefoul ari3ht'
Haddest' þou as gret' leue as þou hast' mi3ht'
To p*er*fourme al þy lust' in engendure /
Thou haddest' bygeten many a creature
Allas why werest' þou so wyd a Cope
God 3if' me sorwe and I were a Pope
Nou3t' oonly þou but' eu*er*y mighty man
Though he were schore heyhe vpon his pan
Schulde haue a wyf' for al þis world is lorn
Religioñ haþ take vp al þe corn
Of' tredyng' and we borell*e* men ben schrimpes
Of' feeble trees þer comeþ wrecched ympes

This makeþ þat oure heires ben so sclendre
And feble þat þay may not wel engendre
This makeþ þat oure wyfes wol assay
Religious folk for þey may bettre pay
Of venus payement þen mowen we
God woot no lussheburghes paye ȝe
But beþ nought wroþ my lord þough þat I play
fful ofte in game a soþ I haue herd say
This worþy monk took al in pacience
And sayde I wil do al my diligence
As fer as sowneþ in to honeste
To telle ȝou a tale or tuo or þre
And if ȝou liste herkne hiderward [leaf 236]
I wol ȝou seyn þe lyf of seint Edward
Or elles tregedys first wol I telle
Of whiche I haue an hundred in my selle
Tregedye is for to telle a certein storye
As olde bookes maken memorie
Of hem þat stood in gret prosperite
And is y-falle out of heigh degre
In-to miserie and endeþ wrecchedly
And þey ben vercefyed comenly
Of sixe foote whiche þat men clepen examytron
In proce eek ben endited many oon
And eek in metre in many a sondry wyse
Lo þis aughte ȝou ynough suffyse
Now herkneþ if ȝou liste for to heere
But first I ȝou beseche in þis mateere /
þough I by ordre telle nouȝt þese þinges
Be it of Popes Emperours or Kynges
And after here ages as men writen fynde
But telle hem some bifore some behinde
As it comeþ now to my remembrance
Haueþ me excused of myn ignorance

¶ Explicit prologus monachi

¶ Here telleþ þe monk / De casib*us* viror*um* illustriu*m*
¶ C^m xxj^m

[*No breaks between the stanzas in the MS.*]

I Wol bewayle in maner of Tregedye
The harme of hem þat standeþ[1] in heih degre [1 stoden, later, in the margin]
And fellen so þat þer nas no remedye
To bringen hem out of here aduersite 3184
ffor certein when þat fortune lust to fle
Ther may no man of hire þe cours wiþholde /
[2Lat nonis truste on blyn[d] p*ros*per*i*te2] [2—2 later, in margin]
Beþ war by þis ensamples 3ong and olde 3188

[*Lucifer.*]

At lucifer þough he an aungel were ¶ P*ri*mo de lucifero
And nought a man at him I wol begynne
ffor þeigh fortune may non aungel dere
ffrom heih degre 3et felle he for his synne 3192
Doun in-to helle wher as he 3et is Inne
O lucifer brightest of aungeles alle
Now art þou Sathanas þat mayst not twynne [leaf 236, back]
Out of miserie which þou art y-falle 3196

De Ad*a*mo [*in margin.*]

[LO Adam in the felde of/ Damascene. [Harl. MS 1758, *leaf* 184]
With goddis/ owne finger/ wroght/ was/ he.
And not bi getyng/ of/ mannes/ sperme vnclene.
And welte aH Paradis/ sauyng/ oo tre. 3200
Had neuyr/ worldly man so hye degree.
As/ Adam had tilt he for his/ gouernaunce.
Was/ dryuen out/ of/ his/ hye prosp*e*rite.
To labour/ an to helle & to myschaunce.] [Harl. *extract ends*]

[*Sampson.*]

¶ Lo Sampson which was annu*n*ciate
By þangel long' er his natiuite /
And was to god almigħty consecrate
And stood in nobles whiles he mighte se
Was neuer such anoþer as was he
To speke of' strengþe and þer*to* hardynes
But' to his wyues tolde he his secre
Thurgħ which he slougħ himself' þurgħ wrecchednes

¶ Sampson þis noble and mighty champioñ
Wiþouten wepen sauf' his handes tweye
he slougħ and al to-rente þe leoun
Toward his weddyng' walkyng' by þe weye
his false wyf' couþe him so plese and preye /
Til sche his counseil knewe and sche vntrewe
Vnto his foos his counseil gan bewreye
And him forsok' and took' anoþer newe

¶ An hundred foxes tok' Sampson for Ire
And alle here tayles he togyder bond
And sette þe foxes tayles alle on fuyre
ffor he in eu*er*y tail haþ putt' a brond
And þey brent' alle þe cornes in þat' lond
And eek' here Olyues and here vynes eeke
A þousend men eek' he slougħ wiþ his hond
And hadde no wepne but' an asse cheeke

¶ Whan þey were slayn so þursted him þat' he
Was wel neigħ lorn for which he gan to preye
That' god wolde of' his peyne haue som pite [leaf 237]
And sende him drinke or elles most' he deye /
And of' þis asse cheeke þat' was so druye
Out' of' a wang' tooþ sprang' anon a welle
Of' which he drank' ynough schortly to seye
Thus hilpe him god as Iudici*um* can telle

¶ By verray force at Gasan on a night
Maugre philistiens of þat Cite
The gates of þe toun he haþ vp plight
And on his bakke y-karyed hem haþ he
heighe on an hille where as men mighte se
O noble almighty Sampsoñ leef and deere
That strong and noble haþ be /
In alle þis world ne hadde þer ben þy peere

¶ This Sampsoñ neuer cyder drank ne wyn
Ne on his heed came Rasour non ne scheere
By precepte of þe messanger deuyn
ffor alle his strengþe was in his here
And fully twenty 3eer by 3ere
he hadde of Israel þe gouernañce
But after soone schal he wepe many a teere
ffor wommen schuln bringe him to meschañce

¶ Vnto his lemman Dalida he tolde
That in his heeres alle his strengþe lay
And falsly to his fomen sche him solde
And slepyng vpon hire barme vpan a day
Sche made to clippe or schere his here away
And made his foomen alle his crafte aspyen
And whan þat þay him fond in such aray
They bonde him faste and putte out his eyen

¶ But er his heer was y-clipped or y-schaue
Ther was no bond þat might him bynde
But now is he in prisoun putte in a Caue
Where as þey made him at þe querne grynde
O noble Sampson strengest of mankynde
O whilom Iugge in glorie and in richesse
Now maystow wepe with þin eyen blynde [leaf 237, back]
Sc þenes þou art fro wele falle in to wrecchidnesse

¶ The ende of þis Caytiffe was as I schal seye
his foomen made a feste vp-on a day
And made him as here fool biforn hem pleye
And þis was [in] a temple of gret aray
But at þe laste he made a foul affray
ffor he tuo postes schook and made hem falle /
And doun fel temple and al þer it lay
And slough himself and eek his foomen alle

¶ This is to say þe princes euerichon
And eek a þousand bodyes were þey slayn
Wiþ fallyng of þe grete temple of stoon
Of Sampson ne wol I no more sayn
Beþ war of þis ensample olde and playn
That noman telle here counseil to here wyues
Of such þing as þay wolde haue secre fayn
If þat it touche here lymes or here lyues

[*Hercules.*]

¶ Of Ercule þe soueraign conquerour ¶ De Ercule
Syngen his werkes lewede and heih renoun
ffor in his tyme of strengþe he bar þe flour
he slough and rafte þe skyn fro þe leoun
he of sent arwes leyde þe boost a doun
he arpyes slough þe cruel briddes felle
he golden apples rafte þe dragoun
he drough out Serberois þe hound of helle

¶ He slough þe cruel tyraunt Buserus
And made his hors to frete him fleissh and boon
He slough þe verray serpent venymous
Of Achilles tuo hornes brark he oon
And he slough Cacus in a Cave of ston
He slough þe geaunt Anteus þe stronge /
He slough þe grisly boor and þat anoon
And bar þe heed vpon his necke longe

¶ Was neuer wigħt' siþen þe world bygan
þat' sloughħ so many monstres as dede he
Thurgħ out' þis wilde world his name ran [leaf 238]
What' for his strengþe and for his bounte
And euery Reeme went he for to see
He was so strong' þat' no man migħt' him lette
And boþe þe worldes ende saith trophe /
In stede of' bo*u*ndes he a piler sette

¶ A le*m*man hadde þis noble Campioñ
That' highte Deianyre freissh as may
And as þe clerkes maden mencioñ
Sche haþ him sent a scherte freisch and gay
Allas þis scherte and weylaway
Enuenymed was subtily wiþ alle
That' or þat' he had wered it half' a day
It' made his boones fro his fleissch to falle /

¶ But' naþeles some clerk*es* hire exusen
By oon þat' highte Nessus þat' it' maked
Be as be may I wol hire nought' accusen
But' on his bakke þe scherte he weres al naked
Tille þat' his fleissħ was fro þe venym blaked
And whan he saugħ non oþer remedye
In hote coles he haþ himself' y-raked
ffor wiþ no venym deyned he to dye

¶ Thus starf' þis worþy mighty hercules
Lo who may truste on fortune ony þrowe
ffor him þat' folweþ alle þis world of' prees
Er he be war is ofte y-leyd ful lowe
fful wys is he þat' himself' can knowe
Beþ war for when þat' fortune lust' to glose /
Than wayteþ sche hire man doun to þrowe
By such a way as he wolde lest' suppose //

[*Nebuchadnezzar.*]

¶ The mighty trone þe precious tresor — ¶ De Rege Nabugodonosore
The glorious septir and realle mageste
That hadde þe king Nabugodonosor
Wiþ tunge vnneþe may discryued be — 3336
he twyes nam Iherusalem þe cite /
The vessel of þe temple he wiþ him ladde
¶ At Babiloyne was his souerain see / — [leaf 238, back]
In which his glorie and his delit he hadde / — 3340

The fayrest children of þe blood royalle
Of Ierusalem he dede do gylde anon
And maked eche of hem to ben his þralle
Among alle oþer Daniel was oon — 3344
That was þe wisest childe of eu*er*ychon
ffor he þe dremes of þe king expowned
Wher as in Caldey clerk was þer non
That wiste to what fyn his dremes sowned — 3348

¶ This proude king leet make a statue of golde
Sixty cubites longe and seuen in brede
To which Image boþe 3onge and olde
Comaunded he to lowte and haue in drede / — 3352
Or in a fourneys ful of flam*m*es rede
He schal be brent þat wolde nought obeye
But neuere wolde assente to þat dede
Danyel ne his 3onge felawes tweye — 3356

¶ This king of kynges proude and elat
he wende god þat sitte in mageste
Ne might him nought byreue of his estate
But sodeinly he lost his dignite — 3360
And like a beeste him seemed for to be
And ete hey as an oxe and lay þer oute
In reyn wiþ wilde bestes walked he
Til a certein tyme was come aboute — 3364

¶ And ylike an Egles feþeres were his heres
And nayles like briddes clawes were /
God releeued him at' certeyn ȝeeres
And ȝaf' him witte and þanne wiþ many a tere
he þankede god and euer his lyf' in feere
Was he to don amys or more trespas
And or þat' y-leyd was on his beere
he knew wel þat' god was ful of' might' and *grace*

[*Belshazzar.*]

¶ his sone which þat' highte Baltyzar
þat' heeld þe regne after his fader day
he by his fader couþe nouȝt' be war [leaf 239]
ffor prowd he was of' herte and of' array
And eek' an ydolatre was he ay
his heihe astate asseured him in pryde
But' fortune caste him doun and þer he lay
And sodeinly his regne gan deuyde /

¶ De Baltazar *dicti Regis* Nabugodonosor filio

¶ A feste he made vnto his lordes alle
vpon a tyme he made hem bliþe be /
And þenne his officeres gan he calle
Goode bringeth forth þe vesselles q*uod* he
Which þat' my fader in his p*rosper*ite
Out' of' þe temple of' Ier*usalem* byrafte
And to oure heihe goddes þanke we
Of' honour þat oure eldres wiþ vs lafte

¶ His wyf' his lordes and his concubynes
Ay drunken whiles here appetyte laste /
Out' of' þis noble vesseles sondry wynes /
And on a wal þis king' his eyhen caste
And saugħ an hande armles þat/ wrot' ful faste
ffor feer of' which he quook' and siked sore
This hande þat Baltazar made so sore agast'
Wrot' mane techel phares and no more

¶ In al þat' lond magicien was þer non
That' couþe expoune what' þis lettre ment'
But' Daniel expouned it' anon
And sayde king' god to þi fader sent'
Glory and honour Regne tresor and rent
And he was prowde and no þing' god ne dradde /
And þerfore god gret' wreche vpon him sent
And him byrafte þe regne þat' he hadde

¶ He was out' cast' of mannes companye
Wiþ asses was his habitacioñ
And eete hey as a beeste in wete and drye
Til þat' he knew by grace and by resoun
That' god of' heuen haþ domynacioñ
Ouer eu*er*y regne and eu*er*y creature
And þenne hadde god of' him compassioñ [leaf 239, back]
And him restored his regne and his figur*e*

¶ Eke þou þat' art' his sone art' proud also
And knowest' all*e* þis þinges pryuyly
and art' rebell to god and art' his foo
Thou drank' eeke of' hïs vessels boldely
Thy wyf' eek' and þy wenche synfully
Drank' of' þe same vessels sondry wynes
And heryed false goddes cursedly
Ther fore to þe schapen gret' pyne is /

¶ This hand was sent fro god þat on þe wal
Wrot' mane techel phares truste me
Thin regne is doon þou weyest' not' at' al
Deuyded is þy regne and it' schal be
To Medes and to P*er*ses ȝeuen q*uod* he
And þilke same night' þe king' was slawe
And Daryus occupieth his degre
They he þ*er*to nad neyþ*er* right' ne lawe

¶ Lordynges her-by ensample may ȝe take
How þat' in lordschipe is no sikernesse
ffor whan fortune wole a man forsake
He bereþ a-wey his regne and his richesse /
And eek' his freendes boþe more and lesse
And what' man haþ freendes þurgh fortune
Mishap wole make hem enemys I gesse
This p*rouer*be is ful soþ and ful co*m*mune

[*Zenobia.*]

¶ Cenobya of' Palymere þe queene
As writen P*er*siens of' hire noblesse
So worþy was in armes and so keene
That' no wigh't' passed hire in hardynesse /
Ne in lynage ne in oþer gentillesse /
Of' kinges blood of' P*er*ce sche descended
I saye þat' sche nad nouȝt' most' fairnesse
But' of' hire schap sche might' nough't' ben amended

¶ De Cenobia Palymer*ie* regina

¶ ffro hire childhode I fynde þat' sche fledde
Office of' wo*m*men and to woode sche wente
And many a wilde hertes blood sche schedde [leaf 240]
With arwes brode þat' sche to hem sente /
Sche was so swyfte þat' sche anon hem hente
And whan þat' sche was elder sche wold kille
Leouns luperdes and beres alto-rent'
And in hire armes welde hem at' hire wille

¶ Sche dorste wilde bestes dennes seeke
And rennen in þe mounteinz al þe nigh't'
And slepe vnder a bussche and sche couþe eeke
Wrastlen by v*er*ray force and v*er*ray migh't'
Wiþ any ȝong' man were he neuer so wigh't'
Ther mighte no þing' in hir armes stonde
Sche kepte hir maydenhed fro eu*er*y wigh't'
To no man deyned hire to be bonde /

¶ But' atte laste hir freendes han hire maryed
To Odenake a Prince of' þat' Cit'e
Al were it' so þat sche hem longe taryed
And ȝe schuln vnderstonde how þat' he
Hadde suche fantasies as hadde sche
But naþeles whan þey were knette in feere
They lyueden in ioye and in felicite
ffor sche of' hem hadde oþer leef' and deere /

[Saue oo thyng/ that/ sche wolde neuyr/ assente .] [Harl. MS 1758, *f* 187]
By no wey þat' he schulde by hire lye
But' ones for it/ was hire pleyne entent
To haue a childe þe world to multiplye
And al so sone as sche might aspye
That' sche nas nouȝt' wiþ childe wiþ þat' dede
Thanne wolde sche suffre him don his fantasye
Eftsone and nouȝt' but ones out' of' drede /

¶ And if' sche were wiþ childe at' þilke caste
No more schulde he pleye þilke game
Til fully fourty dayes were paste
Thenne wolde sche ones do suffre him þe same
Al were þis Odenak' wilde or tame
he gat' nomore of' hire for þus sche sayde
It' was to wyfes lecchery and schame /
In oþer caas if' þat' men with hem playde [leaf 240, back]

¶ Tuo sones by þis Odonak' had sche
The whiche sche kepte in vertu and lettrure
But' now vnto oure tale turne we /
I saye þat' worschipful creature
And wys þer*with* and large wiþ mesure
So penyble in þe werre and curteys eeke
No more laboure mighte in werre endure
Was non þey alle þis world men schulde seke

¶ Hire riche aray mighte nought' be told
As wel in vessel as in hir clo*þ*inge
Sche was al cladde in p*er*rye and in goolde
And eek' sche lefte nought' for non huntynge
To haue of' sondry tonges folk' knowynge
Whan *þ*at' sche leyser hadde and for to entende
To lerne bookes was al hire likynge
How sche in vertu migħt' hir lyf' dispende

[And schortly of/ this/ storie for to entrete .] [Harl. MS 1758, *leaf* 187, *back*]
¶ So doughty was hire housebande as sche
That' *þ*ey conquered many regnes grete
In *þ*e orient' wi*þ* many a fair Cite
Apportienañt vnto *þ*e mageste
Of' Rome and with strong' hand heeld hem faste
Ne neuer migħt' here fomen don hem fle
Ay whiles *þ*at' Oedenak' dayes laste

¶ Here batayles who so luste hem for to ride ·
Agayn Sapor *þ*e king' and o*þ*er mo ·
And how *þ*at' al *þ*is p*ro*ces felle in · dede ·
Why sche conquered and what title had *þer*to
And after of' hire meschief' and hire woo
how *þ*at sche was beseged and y-take
let' him vnto my mayster Petrarke go
That' writ of' *þ*is ynough I vndertake

¶ Whan Odenake was deed sche mightily
The regnes huld and wi*þ* hir p*ro*pre hand
Agayn hire foos sche faught' trewely
That' *þ*er nas king' ne Prince in al *þ*at land
That he nas gladde if' *þ*at' he g*ra*ce fand [leaf 241]
That sche ne wolde vpon his land werrey
With hire *þ*ey made alleyance by band
To ben in pees and lete hir ryde and pley

¶ The Emperour of Rome Claudius
Ne him byforn þe Romain Galien
Ne dorste neuer be so coragius
Ne non Ermyne ne non Egipcien
Ne Surrien ne non arabien
Wiþinne þe feeld þat dorste with hire fight
Lest þat sche wolde hem wiþ hir handes sleen
Or with hire meyne putten hem to flight

[IN kynges/ abite wente hir/ sones/ two .] [Harl. MS 1758, *leaf* 187, *back*]
As Eyres of here regnes alle
And hermanno and Thymalao
Here names were as Perciens hem calle
But ay fortune haþ ay in hir hony galle
This mighty queene may no while en-dure
ffortune out of hire regne made hire falle
To wrecchednes and to mysauenture

¶ Aurelion whan þat þe gouernance
Of Rome cam in-to his handes tweye
he schoop vpon þis queen to do vengañce
And wiþ his legiouns he took his weye
Toward Cenobye and schortly for to seye
He made hir flee and at þe last hir bent
And fetered hire and eek hir children tweye
And wan þe lond and home to Rome þey went

¶ Among þese oþer þinges þat he wan
hire char þat was wiþ gold wrought and perre
This grete Romayn þis aurelian
Haþ wiþ him ladde for þat men schulde se
Byforn his tryumphe walkeþ sche
Wiþ gilte cheynes on hire necke hangyng
Corouned sche was as after hire degre
And ful of perre charged hire cloþing

¶ Allas fortune sche þat' whilom was
Dredful to kynges and to emperoures · [leaf 241, back]
Now gaureþ al þe poeple on hire allas ·
And sche þat' helmed was in starke stoures · 3560
And wan by force townes strong' and toures ·
Schal on hire heede were a vytremyte
And sche þat' bar þe septre ful of' floures
Schal bere a distaff' hir costes for to quyte 3564

[*Peter the Cruel, of Spain.*]

[1]¶ O noble o worþy petre glorie of' Spayne ¶ De Petro Spayne
Whom fortune helde so heyh in mageste ¶ Rege
Wel oughte men þin pitous deþ complayne
Thy bastard broþer made þe to fle
And after at a sege by subtilte
þow were betrayed and lad to his tent' 3570
Wher as he wiþ his owen hand slough þe
Succedyng' in þy regne and in þin rent' 3572

[1 *wrongly markt* b *in margin, by a later corrector, to follow* a (De nero &c).

¶ The feeld of' snow wiþ þe egle blak' þer-Inne ¶ Bertheun Claykyn
Caught' wiþ þe lymrodde coloures as þe gledes ¶ Olyuer Mawny
he brew þis cursednes and al þe synne
The wicked neste was werker of' þis needes
Nought Charles Olyuer þat' ay took' god heede
Of' trouþe and honour but of' armorekke 3578
Genyloun Olyuer corupte for meede
Broughtest' þis worþi king' in such a brekke 3580

[*Bertrand du Guesclin, & his cousin Sir Oliver de Mauny*, l. 3579.]

[*Peter of Cyprus.*]

¶ Worþy Petre king' of' Cypre also ¶ De petro regis ¶ Cypri
þat' alisaundre wan by heigh maystrie
fful many an heþen wroughtest' þou ful wo
Of' which þin owen liege had enuye 3584
And for no þing' but' for þin Chiualrie
They in þin bedde han slayn þe by þe morwe
Thus gan fortune gouerne and gye
And out' of' ioye bringe men in-to sorwe 3588

[*Bernabo Visconti, of Milan.*]

¶ Of Melane gret barnabo viscounte
God of delite and scourge of lumbardye
Why schulde nouȝt I þin fortune acounte /
Seþþen in estaat þou clombe were so hihe
Thin broþer sone þat was þin double allye
ffor he þin neuew was and sone in lawe
Wiþinne his prisoñ made þe to deye
But why ne how wot I þat þou were slawe //

¶ De Barnabo vicecomite ¶ Mediolano /

[*Ugolino, Count of Pisa.*]

¶ Of þe erl hugelyne of Pyse þe langour
Ther may no tunge telle for pite
But lytel out of pyse stant a toure
In which toure in prisoñ putte was he
And wiþ him ben his litel children þre
The eldest skarsly .v. ȝer was of age
allas fortune it was gret cruelte
Suche briddes for to putte in such a kage

¶ De hugylyno Comite Pisano.

¶ Dampned he was to deyen in þat prisoñ
ffor Roger which þat bisschop was of pyse
Hadde on him maade a fals suggestioñ
Thurgh which þe poeple gan on him aryse
And putten him to prysoñ in swich wyse
As ȝe haue herde and mete and drynk he hadde
[. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*]
And *þer*-wiþ-al it was ful pore and badde

¶ And on a day bifelle þat in þat oure
Whan þat his mete was wont to be brought
The Gailler schutte þe dores of þe toure
He herde it wel but he saugh it nought
And in his herte anon þer felle a þought
þat þey for hunger wolde don him deyen
Allas q*uod* he allas þat I was wrought
þer-wiþ þe teeres felle fro his eyen

¶ his ȝonge sone þat' þre ȝeer was of' age
vnto him sayde fader why do ȝe wepe
When wil þe Gaylere bringen oure potage
Is þer no morsel bred þat' ȝe do kepe
I am so hungry þat' I may nought' slepe
Now wolde god þat I might' slepen euer
Thanne schulde non hunger in my wombe crepe
þer nys no þing' sauf' bred þat me were leuer

¶ Thus day by day þis childe gan to crye
Til in his fadres barme a doun it lay
And sayde fare wel f'ader I mot' deye [leaf 242, back]
And kissed his fader and deyde þe same day
And whan þe woful fader ded him say
ffor wo his armes tuo he gan to byte /
And sayde allas fortune and welaway
Thyn fals wheel my wo I may al wyte

¶ His children wende þat' it' for hunger was
þat' he his armes gnowe and nought for wo
And sayde fader do nouȝt' so allas
But' raþer ete þe fleissch vpon ous tuo
Oure fleissch þou ȝaf' vs take oure flessch vs fro
And ete ynough right' þus to him þay sayde /
And after þat' wiþinne a day or tuo
They leyde hem doun right' in his lappe and deyde /

Himself' dispeyred eek' for hunger starf'
Thus ended is þe mighty erl of' Pyse
ffro heih estate fortune fro him karf'
Of' þis tregetrye it' ought' ynough suffise/
Who so wol heere it' in a lenger wise
Redeþ þe grete poete of' ytayle /
That' highte daunte for he can it' deuyse
ffro poynt' to poynt' nouȝt' o word wol he fayle

GROUP B. § 12. MONK'S TALE. Corpus MS.

[*Nero.*]

[1] ¶ Al þough þat' Nero was as vicious — De nero
As eny feend þat' liþ ful lowe adoun
Zet' he as telleþ vs Swetheneus
This wilde world haþ in Subiecciou*n*
Boþe Est' and west' and Septe*m*ptriou*n*
Of' Rubies Saphires and of' perlis white
Were alle his cloþes brouded vp and doun
ffor he in ge*m*mes grete gan delyte

¶ More delicate more pompous of' array
More proud was neuer emp*er*our þan he
þat' ilke cloþ þat' he had wered a day
After þat' tyme he nolde it neuer se
Nettes of' golde þred hadde he gret' plente
To fissche in Tybre when him leste to pleye
his lustes were as lawe in his degre [leaf 243]
ffor fortune as his freende wolde him obeye

¶ He Rome brente for his delicacye
The senatoures he slough vpon a day
To heere how þat' men wolde weepe and crye
And slough his broþer and by his suster lay
His mooder made he in pitous aray
ffor he hire wombe slitte to byholde
Where he consceyued was so weylaway
þat' he so litel of his moder tolde

¶ No teere out' of' his eyhen for þat' sight'
Ne came but' sayde a fair wo*m*man was sche
Gret' wonder is þat' he couþe or might'
Be domesman) of' hire ded beute
The wyn to brynge þo comañded he
And drank' anon . non o*þer* wo he made /
Whan might' is ioygned vnto cruelte
Allas to deepe wole þe venym wade

[1 *wrongly markt .a. by a later corrector, to go before Peter of Spain.*]

¶ In ȝouþe a mayst*er* hadde þis emp*er*our
To teche him lettrure and curtesye
ffor of' moralite he was þe flour
As in his tyme but' if' bookes lye
And whiles his mayster hadde of' him maystrye
He made him so konnyng' and so souple /
That' longe tyme it' was or tyrannye
Or any vice dorste in him vncouple

¶ This Seneka of' which I deuyse
By cause nero hadde of' him such drede
ffor he for vices wolde him chastise
Discretly as by word and nought by drede
Sire wolde he sayn an Emp*er*our moot' needе
Be vertuous and hate tyrauntrye
ffor which he him in bathe made to blede
In boþe his armes til he moste dye

¶ This nero hadde eek' of a costumm*a*nce
In ȝouþe aȝeins his mayster for to ryse
Which aftirward him þoght a gret' greuaunce [leaf 243, back]
Therfore he made him deye in þis wise
But' naþeles þis Seneke þe wise /
Chees in a bathe to deye in þis manere /
Raþer þan han anoþ*er* tormentrye
And þus haþ Nero slayn his mayster deere

¶ Now felle it' so þat' fortune lust' no lenger
þe heihe pryde of' nero to cherissche
ffor þough he were strong' ȝet' was sche streng*er*
Sche þoghte þus by god I am to nyse
To setten a man þat' is fulfilde of' vice
In heigh degre and emp*er*our him calle
By god out' of' his sete I wol him tryce
When he lest' weneþ sonnest' schal he falle

¶ The poeple ros vpon him on a nigħt
ffor his defaute and whan he it aspyed
Out of his dores anon he haþ him digħt
Allone and þer he wende han ben allyed
he knokked faste and ay þe more he cryed
þe faster schutten þey þe dores alle
Tho wiste he wel he hadde himself begyled
And went his way no lenger dorste he calle /

¶ The poeple cryed and rombled vp and doun
þat wiþ his eeres herde he how þey sayde
Wher is þis false tyraunt þis Neroun
ffor fere almost out of his witte a brayde
And to his goddes pitously he sayde
ffor socour but it mighte nought betyde
ffor drede of þis him þoughte þat he deyde
and ran in to a gardyn him to huyde

¶ And in þis gardyn fond he cherles tweye
And saten by a fuyre ful grete and rede
And to þe cherles twey he gan to preye
To slen him and to gurden of his hede
That to his body whan þat he were dede
Were no despite y-done for his deffame /
Himself he slough he couþe no better reed [leaf 244]
Of which fortune lough and hadde a game

[*Holofernes.*]

¶ Was neuer Capitayn vnder a king ¶ De Olipherno
þat regnes mo putte in subiecciou*n*
Ne strenger was in feeld of alle þing
As in his tyme ne gretter of Reno*u*n
Ne more pompous in heigħ p*re*sumpcio*u*n
Then Olyferne which fortune ay keste /
So likerously and ladde him vp and do*u*n
Til þat he hed was er þat he wiste /

¶ Noughtˢ oonly þatˢ þis world had ofˢ him awe /
ffor lesyngˢ ofˢ Richesse and liberte
Butˢ he made eu*e*ry man reneye his lawe /
Nabugodonosor was lord sayde
Non oþer god schulde honoured be
Aȝeins his heste no wightˢ dar trespace /
Saue in Bethulya a strangˢ Cite
Where Elyachim a prestˢ was ofˢ þatˢ place

¶ Butˢ take keepe ofˢ þe deþ ofˢ Olypherne
Amydde his hoste he drunke lay a nyghtˢ
Wiþinne his tente large as is a berne /
And ȝetˢ for alle his pompe and alle his mighteˢ
Iudith a wo*m*man as he lay vprighteˢ
Slepyngˢ his heed ofˢ smotˢ and fro his tent /
fful pryuyly sche stal fro eu*e*ry wight
[. . . . . *no gap in the MS.*]

[*Antiochus.*]

¶ Whatˢ needeþ itˢ ofˢ kingˢ antiochus — ¶ De antiochio illustr*i*.
To telle his heihe and real mageste
his heighe pruyde his werkes venymous
ffor such anoþer nas neuer non as he
Redeþ which þatˢ he was in Machabe
And redeþ þe proude wordes þatˢ he sayde
And why he felle fro his p*rosper*ite
And in an hulle how wrecchedly he deyde

¶ ffortune him hadde enhaunced so in pruyde
þatˢ verrayly he wende he mighte atteyne
vnto þe sterres vpon euery syde
And in a balaunce to weye vche mountayne / [leaf 244, back]
And alle þe floodes ofˢ þe see restreyne
And goddes poeple hadde he mostˢ in hate
Hem wolde he sle in tormentˢ and peyne /
Wenyngˢ þatˢ god ne mightˢ his pruyde abate

¶ And for þat' Nichamour and Thymothee
Wiþ Iewes were venquyscht' mightily
Vnto þe Iewes swich an hate hadde he
That' he hadde greythed his chaar ful hastily
And swor and sayde ful dispitously
vnto Ier*usale*m he wolde eft' sone /
To wreke his Ire on hit' ful cruelly
But' of' his purpos he was lette ful sone /

¶ God for his manace him so sore smot/
Wiþ inuisible wounde ay vncurable/
That' in his guttes karf' so and bote
That' his peynes were importable
And certeynly þe wreche was resonable
ffor many mannes guttes dede he payne
But' fro his pourpos cursed and dampnable
ffor alle his smerte he nolde him nought' restreyne

¶ But' bad anon apparaylen his Oste
And sodeinly er he was of' hit/ ware
God daunted alle his pruyde and alle his boste
ffor he so sore felle out' of' his chare
That' hurt' his lymes and his skyn totare
So þat' he ne mighte go ne ryde
But' in a Chayer men aboute him bare
Al forbrused boþe bak' and syde

¶ The wreche of' god him smot' so cruelly
That' in his body wickede wormes crepte
And *þer*-wiþ-al he stank' so orribly
That' non of alle his meigne þat him kepte /
Wheþer so þat' he wook' or elles slepte /
Ne mighte nought/ þe stynk' of' him endure
In þis meschief' he weyled and eek' wepte /
And knewe god lord of' eu*er*y creature [leaf 245]

¶ To alle his hostꝰ and to himselfꝰ also
fful wlatsom was þe stynke ofꝰ þis Careyne
No man ne mighte him bere to ne fro
And in his stynke and in his horible peyne
He starfꝰ ful wrecchedly in a mounteyne
Thus haþ þis robbour and þis homicide
That many a man made to weepe and pleyne
Such guerdoñ as bilongeþ vnto pruyde /

[*Alexander the Great.*]

¶ The story ofꝰ alisaundre is so commune ¶ De alexandro magno philippi Regis Macedonie filio.
Thatꝰ euery wightꝰ þatꝰ haþ discrecioun
haþ herd somwhatꝰ or al ofꝰ his fortune
This wilde world as in conclusioun
He wan by strengþe or for his heigh renoun
They weren glad for pees vnto him sende
The pruyde ofꝰ man and beste he leyde a doun
Wher so he cam vnto þe worldes ende

¶ Comparisoñ migħt neuer ȝit/ be maked
Betwix him and anoþer conquerour
ffor alle þis worlde for drede ofꝰ him haþ quaked
he was ofꝰ knighthede and ofꝰ fredam flour
ffortune him made þe heier ofꝰ hure honour
Saue wyn and wommen no þingꝰ mightꝰ aswage /
His heihe ententꝰ in armes and labour
So was he fulle ofꝰ louynge corage

¶ Whatꝰ pite were itꝰ to him þey I ȝou tolde
Ofꝰ darius and an .C. þousand mo
Ofꝰ kinges princes dukes eerles bolde
Which he conquered and brouȝtꝰ hem in-to woo
I say as fer as man may ryde or goo
þe worlde was his whatꝰ schulde I more deuyse
ffor þoughħ I write or tolde ȝou euermo
Of his knighthode he mighte noughtꝰ suffise

¶ Twelfᵗ ȝeer he regned as saiþ Machabe
Philippes sone ofᵗ Macedo he was /
Thatᵗ firstᵗ was kingᵗ ofᵗ Grece þe Contre /
O worþy gentil alisandre allas [leaf 245, back]
þatᵗ euer schulde falle such a caas
Enpoysoned ofᵗ þin folkᵗ þou were
þyn . S fortune haþ torned in-to an aas
And ȝetᵗ for þe ne weep sche neuer a tere

¶ Who schal men ȝeue teeres to compleyne
The deþ ofᵗ gentilesse and ofᵗ fraunchise
þatᵗ alle þe world weeldid in his demeygne /
And ȝetᵗ him þoughte itᵗ mighᵗ not suffise /
So ful was his corage ofᵗ heigh emprise
Allas who schal me helpe to endite
ffals fortune and poysoñ to despise
þe whiche tuo ofᵗ al þis wo I wite

[*Julius Cæsar.*]

¶ By wisedom manhede and by labour ¶ De Iulio Cesare.
ffro humbleheed and fro Royal mageste
vp ros he Iulius þe Conquer*our*
That alle þe Occident by land and fee
By strengþe of hand or elles by tretee
And vnto Rome made hem tributarie
And scþenes ofᵗ Rome þemp*erour* was he
Til þatᵗ fortune wax his adu*er*sarie

¶ O mighty Cesar þatᵗ in Tessalye
Aȝens Pompeus fader þin in lawe
Thatᵗ ofᵗ þe Orientᵗ hadde al þe chiualrye
as ferre as þatᵗ þe day begynneþ dawe
þou þorugh þin knighthode þou hastᵗ hem take and slawe /
Saue fewe folkᵗ þatᵗ wiþ Pompeus fledde /
þurgh which þou puttestᵗ al þe Orient in awe
Thanke fortune þatᵗ so wel þe spedde

¶ But now a litel while I wol bewayle /
þis Pompeus þis noble gouernour
Of Rome which þat fleigh at þis batayle
I say on of his men a fals traytour
His heed of smoot/ to wynne him fauour
Of Iulius and him þe heed broughte
Allas Pompeye of þe Orient conquerour
That fortune vnto such a finye brought̄e [leaf 246]

¶ To Rome aȝein repayreþ Iulius
Wiþ his triumphe laureate ful heyȝe
But on a tyme Brutus Cassius
That euer had of his heigh̄ estaat enuye
fful priuily had maad conspiracie
Aȝeins þis Iulius in subtil wise
And caste þe place in which he schulde deye
Wiþ boydekynnes as I schal ȝou deuyse

¶ þis Iulius to þe Capithole went
vppon a day as he was wont to goon
And in þe Capitolye anon him hent
This false brutus on his foule foon
And stiked him wiþ boydekynnes anon
Wiþ many a wounde and þus þey leet/ him lye
But neuer gronte he at no stroke but oon
Or elles at tuo but if his story lye

¶ So manly was þis Iulius of herte
And so wel loued estaatly honeste
That þough his dedly woundes so sore smerte
His mantel ouer his hepes caste he
ffor noman schulde seen his priuyte
And as he lay as deyinge in a traunce
And wiste verrily þat deed was he
Of honeste ȝet hadde he remembrance

¶ Lucane to þis story I recomende
And to Swetoñ and to Valerius also
That' of þis story writeþ word and ende
how þat' þese grete conqueroures tuo
ffortune was ferst' freend and siþen a foo
No man ne truste vpon his fauour longe
But' haue hire in awayte for eueremo
Witnesse on alle þise conqueroures stronge

[*Cresus.*]

¶ This riche Cresus whilom king' of lyde
Of' whiche Cresus Cyquus sore him dradde
3et' was he caught' amyddes alle his pryde
And to be brent' men to þe fuyre him ladde
But' such a reyn doun fro þe walken schadde
þat' slough þe fuyr and made him to askape
But' to be war 3et' no *grace* he hadde
Til fortune on þe galwes made him gape

Cresus.

[leaf 246, back]

¶ Whan he askaped was he can not' stynte
ffor to begynne a newe reyne a3ein
he wende wel for þat' fortune him sente
Such happe þat' he escaped þurgh þe rayn
That' of' his foos he mighte not' be slayn
And swich a swefne vppan a night' he mette
Of which he was so proud and eek' so fayn
That' in vengaunce he alle his herte sette

¶ Vpon a tree he was as þat' him þought'e
There Iubit*er* him wisshe boþe halse and syde
And Phebus eek' a fair towayle him broughte
To druye him wiþ and þ*er*fore wax his pryde
And to his doughter þat stood him besyde
Which þat' he knew in heigh sentence abounde
He bad hire telle him what' it' signefyed
And sche his dreemes bygan right' þus expounde

¶ The tree q*uod* sche þe galwes is to mene
And Iubiter bitokneþ snow and rayn
And Phebus wiþ his towayle so clene
Tho be þe sonne stremes for to sayn
Thou schalt' an honged be fader certayn
Reyn schal þe waissche and sonne schal þe druye
þus warned him ful platte and ful playn
His doughter þat' called was Phanye /

¶ An honged was Cresus þe proude king'
His roial trone might' him nought auayle
Tegedie is non oþe*r* mane*r* þing'
Ne can synnynge crye ne by-wayle
But' þat' fortune alway wol assayle /
Wiþ vnwar strook' þe regnes that' ben proude
ffor whan men trusteþ hire þan wol sche fayle
And couere hiré brighte face wiþ a cloude [leaf 247]

¶ Explic*it*/

¶ Here begynneþ þe prologe of' þe nonne prestes tale
[*on leaf* 247]

HO *quod* þe knigħt' goode sire nomore of' þis
þat' ȝe han sayde is right' ynougħ ywis
And meche more for litel heuynesse
Is right' ynougħ to meche folk' as I gesse / [*no gap in the Corpus MS*] 3960
[I sey for me. it' is a grete disease [MS Reg. 17 D. xv, *lf* 273, *bk*]
Where as men han bien. in grete welthħ and ease
To here of' theyr sodayn falle alas
And the contrary is Ioy. and grete solas 3964
And whan a man hathħ bien in pou*er* estate
And clymbithħ vp. and wexithħ fortunate
And ther abydithħ · in prosperite [*leaf* 274]
Swiche thyng' is gladsom. as it' thynkythħ me 3968
And of' swiche thynges. were goodely for to telle
Ya quod oure host'. be seynt' poulis belle
Ye say right sothħ. this monk' be clappid lowde
He spak' how fortune. was cou*er*ed' withħ a clowde 3972
I not' neu*er* what'. and als of' a tregedye
Right' now ye herd. and parde no remedye
Is it' for to be-wailen. and compleyn
That'. that' is don. and als it' is a peyn 3976
As ye have sayd'. to here of' hevynesse
Sir monke nomore of' this. so god' yow blisse
Yowre tale anoyethħ. al this company
Swiche thyng' is nat' worthħ a boterflye] [MS Reg. *extract ends*]
ȝoure tales don vs no desport' ne game
Wherfore s*ir* monk' Doun Pieres by ȝour name
I pray ȝou hertely telle vs som what' elles
ffor siker nere clynkyng' of' ȝoure belles / 3984

þat' on 3oure brydel hangeþ on eu*er*y syde /
By heuene king' þat' for vs all*e* dyde
I schal for þis falle do*un* for slepe /
Al þough þe slough hadde neuer ben so depe
þan hadde 3oure tale be told in vayn
ffor certeinly as þese clerkes sayn
Wher as a man may han non audience
Nought' helpeþ it to tellen his sentence
And wel I woot' þe substañce is in me /
If' eny þing' schal wel reported be
Sire say somwhat' of' huntyng' I 3ou p*ra*y
Nay q*uod* þe monk' I haue no lust' to play
Now lete anoþ*er* telle as I haue tolde
þanne spak' oure Ost' wiþ ruyde speche and bolde
And sayde vnto þe nonnes prest' anon
Come ner sire prest' com hider s*ir* Iohn̄
Telle vs such þing' as may oure hertes glade
Be mery þough þou ryde vpon a Iade /
What' þough þin hors be hagged foul or lene
If' he wol serue þe rekke þe nought' a bene
Loke þat' þin herte be mery euermo
3is Ost' q*uod* he so mote I ryde or go
But' I be mery I-wys I wil be blamed
And right' anon he haþ his tale tamed
And þus he seyde to vs eu*er*ychon
This swete prest' þis goode man s*ir* Iohn̄ .

¶ Explic*it* p*ro*log*us*

Ca^{m} xxij^{m}

¶ Here begynneþ þe nonnes prestes tale of^{t} þe kokke & his vij. hennes

A Pou*er*e wydewe somdel stope in age [leaf 247, back]
Was whilom dwellyng^{t} in a narwe cotage
Besydes a groue standyng^{t} in a dale
This wydewe of^{t} which I telle ȝou my tale
Seþins þilke day þat^{t} sche was last/ a wyf^{t}
In pacience ladde a ful simple lyf^{t}
ffor litel was hire catell*e* and hire rent
By housbondrye of^{t} such as god hire sent^{t}
Sche fand hire self^{t} and eek^{t} hire doughtren tuo
þre large sowes hadde sche and nomo
Thre kyn and eek^{t} a scheep þat^{t} highte malle
fful sooty was hire bour and eek^{t} hire halle
In which sche eet^{t} ful many a sklender mel
Of^{t} poynañt^{t} Sause hire needed neuer a del
No deynte morsell passed hire þrote
Hire dyete was acordañt to hire cote
Replecioñ ne made hire neuere seeke
A-tempree diete was all*e* hire Phiseke
And excersise and hertes suffisañce
The gowte lėtted hire no þing^{t} to daunce
Ne Poplexie ne schente not hire heed
No wyn ne drank^{t} sche ney*þer* whit ne reed
Hire bord was s*er*ued most^{t} wiþ whit and blak
Milk^{t} and bro*u*n breed in which sche fond no lak
Seynd bacoñ and somtyme an ey or tweye
ffor sche was as it^{t} was a maner deye
A gardyn sche hadde enclosed all*e* aboute
Wiþ stikkes and a druye diche wiþoute
In which sche hadde a cokk^{t} þat^{t} highte Chaunteclere
In all*e* þe land of^{t} crowyng^{t} nas his peere

his voys was merier þan þe mery Orgon
On masse dayes þat' in þe chirche gon
Wel sikerer was þe crowyng' in his logge
þan is a clokke or eny abbay orlogge
By nature he knew eche assencioñ
Of' equinoxial of' þilke toun
ffor whan degrees .xv. were discendid [leaf 248]
þenne knew he þat' it' might nought ben amended
His cambe was redder þen þe fyn coralle
And batailled as it' were a castel walle
Ylike asure were his legges and his toon
His byle was blak' and as þe Iet' it' schon
His nayles whitter þen þe lily flour
And ylike burnysscht' gold was his colour
This gentil cokke hadde in his gouernance /
.vij. hennes for to doon his plesañce
Whiche weren his sustres and his paramoures
And wonder ylike to him as of' coloures
Of' which þe fairest' hewed on þe þrote
Was cleped faire damisel pertelote
Curteys sche was discret' and debonaire
And companable / and bar hire self' so faire
Siþens þilke day þat' sche was seuenyght olde
þat' trewely sche haþ þe herte in holde
Of' chaunteclere loken in euery liþ
He loued hire so þat' wel was him þerwith
But' such a ioye as it' was to heere hem synge
Whan' þat' þe brighte sonne gan to springe
In swete acorde my leef' is fare in londe /
ffor þilke tyme as I haue vnderstonde
Beestes and briddes couþe speke and synge
And so bifelle þat' in a dawenynge /
As Chaunteclere among' his wyfes alle
Satte on his perche þat' was in þe halle
And next' him sat' þis faire Pertelote
þis Chaunteclere gan gronen in his þrote

As a man þat is in his dreme drecched sore
And when þat Pertelote þus herde him rore
Sche was agast/ and sayde herte deere
What eyleþ 3ou to grone in þis manere
3e ben a verray sleper fy for schame /
And he answerde and sayde þus ma dame /
I pray 3ou þat 3e take it not to greef [leaf 248, back]
By god me mette þat I was in such mescheef
Right now þat 3et myn herte is sore afright
Now quod he my sweuene reed aright
And keepe my body out of foul prisoun
Me mette þat I romed vp and doun
Wiþinne oure 3erde wher as I saugh a beeste
Was lik an hound and wolde han made areste /
vpon my body and wolde han had me deed
His colour was betwixe whit and reed
And tipped was his tail and boþe his eeres
Wiþ blak vnlik þe remenañt of his heeres
his snowte smal with glowyng eyen tweye
3et of his look for feer almost I deye
This caused me my gronyng douteles
Avoy quod sche // ffy on 3ou herteles
Allas quod sche: ffor by þat god aboue
Now haue 3e lost myn herte and al my loue
I can nought loue a coward by my feiþ
ffor certes what so eny womman seiþ
We wolle alle desyren if it mighte be
To haue housbondes hardy wise and fre
And secre ne no nyggard ne no fool
Ne him þat is agast of euery tool
Ne non auauntour by þat god aboue
How dorste 3e say for schame vnto 3oure loue / 4108
That eny þing might make 3ou aferd [1 *not in* Reg. 18 C 2, *if* 228]
Han 3e no mannes herte and han a berd
Allas and konne 3e be agast of sweuons
[Nothyng god wote. but vanite in sweuene is[1]] [Reg. 17 D xv, *leaf* 276]

Sweuenes engendren of replexiones [1 *not in* Reg. 18 C 2]
[And oft of synne. and of complexiouns [1]] [MS Reg. 17 D xv]
When humo*ur*s ben to habundaunt in a wight
Certes þis dreme which ȝe han herd to nyght
Cometh of þe grete sup*er*fluite
Of ȝoure reede colre sire p*ar*de
Which causeþ folk to dremen here dreemes
Of arwes and of fuyre with reede leemes
Of reede bestes þat woln hem byte [leaf 249]
Of Contell*e* and of whelpes grete an lyte
Right as he humour malencolie
Causeþ many a man in slepe to crye
ffor feere of beres and of boles blake
Or elles blake deueles woln hem take
Of oþer humours couþe I telle also
þat worken many a man in sleep ful woo
But I wol passe as lightly as I can
Lo Catoñ which þat was so wys a man
Sayde he nouȝt þus ne do no force of dremes
Now sire q*uod* sche whan we flee fro þe beemes
ffor goddes loue as takeþ som laxatif
Vp p*er*il of my soule and of my lyf
I counceile ȝou þe beste I wol not lye
þat boþe of colre and of malencolye
ȝe purge ȝou and for ȝe schuln nought tary
þough þat in þis toun is non apotecary
I schal my self to herbes techen ȝou
That schal ben ȝoure hele and ȝoure prow
And in þe gardyn þo herbes schal I fynde
The whiche han of here p*ro*prete by kynde
To purgen ȝou bynetþe and eek aboue
fforȝeteþ nouȝt þis for goddes owne loue
ȝe ben ful Colrik of Compleccioñ
Were þe sonne in his ascencioñ
Ne fynde ȝou replete and ȝoure humors hote
and if it do I dar wel leye a groote

That' ȝe schuln haue a feuer terciane
Or an agu þat' may ben ȝoure bane
A day or tuo ȝe schuln haue digestyues
Of' wormes er ȝe take ȝoure laxatyues
Of' laureole Centure and of' fumytere
Or ellis of' Ellebore þat' groweþ þere
Of' Catapuce or of' gaytres buryes
Of' herbe yue growyng' in oure ȝerde þer mery is
Pek' hem vp right' as þey growe and et' hem In [leaf 249, back]
Be mery housbande for ȝoure fádres kyn
Dredeþ no dreem I can say ȝou no more
Ma dame q*uod* he grame*r*cy of' ȝoure lore
But' naþeles as touching' dann Cato*u*n
That' haþ of' wisdom such a gret' reno*u*n
By god men may in olde bookes reede
Oon of' þe grettest' auctour out' of' drede
Of' many a man more of' auctorite
þenne euer Catoñ was so mote I þe
That' alle þe reuers sein of' his sentence
And han wel founden by exp*er*ience
þat' dreemes ben significacioñs
As wel of' ioye as of' tribulac*i*ons
þat' folk' enduren in þis lyf' p*re*sent
Ther needeþ nouȝt' to make of' þis non argument'
The verray preef' scheweþ it in dede
On of' þe grettest' auctour þat' men rede
Saiþ þus þat' whilom tuo felawes went
On pylgrimage in a ful good entent'
And happed so þey camen in-to a toun
Wher as þer was such congregacioñ
Of' poeple and eek' of' streight' herburgage
That' þey ne fand as moche as a cotage /
In which þey boþe might' y-logged be
Wherfore þey mosten of' necessite
As for þat' night' departe of' companye
And vche of' hem goþ vnto his ostelrye

And took' his loggynge as it' wolde falle
That' oon of' hem was logged in a stalle
fferre in a ȝerde wiþ oxen of' þe plough
þat' oþer man was logged wel ynough
As was his aduenture or his fortune
þat' vs gouerneþ alle as in comune
And so bifelle it' lange er it was day
þis man mette in his bedde *per* as he lay
how þat' his felaw gan on him to calle [leaf 250]
And sayde allas for in an oxe stalle
This night' schal I be mourdred þer I lye
Now help me deere broþer er I dye
In alle haste come to me he seyde
This man out' of' his sleep for feere abrayde
But' whan þat' he was wakened out' of' his slepe
he turned him and tok' of' þis no kepe /
Him þought' his dreem was nought/ but' vanyte
þus twyes in his sleping' dremed he
And at' þe þridde tyme ȝet' his felawe
Came as him þought' I am now y-slawe
Byholde my bloody woundes deepe and wyde /
Arys vp erely in þe morne tyde /
And at' þe west' gate of' þe toun q*uod* he
A carte fulle of' dunge þere schalt' þou se /
In which my body is hidde ful pryuyly
Do þilke carte aresten boldely
My golde caused my murdre soþ to sayn
And tolde him eu*er*y poynt' how he was slayn
Wiþ a ful pitous face pale of' hewe
And truste wel his dreem he fand ful trewe
ffor on þe morwe as sone as it' was day
To his felawes In he tok' þe way
And whan he com vnto þis Oxe stalle
After his felawe he bigan to calle
The Ostiler answered him anon
And sayde sire ȝoure felawe is y-gon

As sone as day he wente out' of' þe toun
This man gan falle in gret' suspecioñ
Remembryng' on his dreemes þat' he mette
And forþ he goþ no lenger wolde he lette
Vnto þe west' gate of' þe toun and fonde
A dung' carte as he wente to dunge þe londe /
þat' was arrayed in þe same wyse
As ȝe han herde þe deede man deuyse
And wiþ an hardy herte he gan to crye [leaf 250, back]
Vengaunce and Iustice of' þis felonye
My felawe murdred is þis same night
And in þis cart' he lyþ gapyng' vpright'
[I Crie oute on þe mynistris quod he [MS Harl. 7333 (Shirley's), *leaf* 113, *col.* 1. *Not in* Sloane 1685, *leaf* 217, *back; or in* Sloane 1686, *leaf* 285.]
þat shulde kepe and rewle þis citee
Harrow allas here lith my felaw slayn)
What shuld I more vn-to this tale sayn)
þe peple out sterte / & caste þe carte to grounde
And in the medil of the donge þei founde] [Harl. *extract ends*]
The deede man þat' murdred was al newe
O blisful god þat' art' so iuste and trewe /
Lo how þat' þou bywreyest' murdre alway
Murdre wole out' þat' se we day by day
Mordre is so wlatsom and abhominable
To god þat' is so iuste and resonable
That' he wol not' suffre it' hiled be
They it' abyde a ȝeer or tuo or þre
Mordre wole out' þis is my conclusioñ
And right' anon ministres of' þe toun
And hente þe cartere and sore him pyned
And eek' þe osteller so ferre engyned
That þey beknewe here wickednesse anon
And weren hanged by þe nekke boon
Heer may men see þat' dreemes ben to drede
And certes in þe same book' I rede
Right' in þe nexte chapitre I rede of' þis
I gabbe nought/ so haue I ioye & blis

Tuo men þat wolde han passed þe see
ffor certein cause in-to a ferre cuntre
If þat þe wynde nad y-be contrary
þat made hem in a Cite for to tary
That stood ful mery vpon an hauen side
But on a day azens þe euen tyde
The wynd gan chaunge and blowen as him leste
Iolyf and glad þey wenten vnto reste
And casten hem ful erly for to seyle
But herkne þat oo man felle in gret pereyle
That oon of hem in slepyng as he lay
Him mette a wonder dreme azeins þe day
Him þoght a man stood by his beddes syde
And him comānded þat he schulde abyde
And seyde him þus if þou to morwe wende [leaf 251]
Thou schalt be dreynt my tale is at an ende
he awook and tolde his felawe what he mette
and prayed him his viage for to lette
As for þat day he prayde him to abyde
his felawe þat lay by his beddes syde
Gan for to laughe and scorned him ful faste
No dreme q*uod* he may my*n* herte agaste
þat I wol lette for to do my þinges
I sette nouzt a straw by þy dremynges
ffor sweuenes ben but vanytes and Iapes
Men dreme alway of owles and of apes
And of many a mase þer-wiþ-aH
Men dremen of þing þat neuer was ne schal
But siþenes I se þat þou wolt here abyde
And þus forslowþen wilfully þe tyde
God wot it reweþ me and haue good day
And thus he took his leeue and went his way
And er þat he hadde half his cours y-sayled
Not I nought why ne what meschaunce it ayled
But casuelly þe schippes botme rent
And schip and man vnder þe water went

In sight' of' oþer schippes him besyde
þat' wiþ him seyled at' þe same tyde
And þerfore he seyde Pertelote so deere
By suche ensamples olde maist' þou leere
þat' no man schulde be to recheles
Of' dremes for I say þe dowteles
That' many a dreem fol sore is for to drede
Lo in þe lyf' of' Seint' kenelme I rede
þat' was kenulphes sone þe noble king'
Of' Mertenrike how kenelme met' a þing'
A litel er was murdred on a day
His murdre in his avisioñ he say
His norice him expouned eury del
His sweuene and bad him for to kepe him wel
ffor tresoñ but' he was seuen ȝeer old [leaf 251, back]
And þerfore litel tale haþ he told
Of' eny dreem so holly was his herte
By god I hadde leuer þan my scherte
þat' ȝe hadde herde his legende as haue I
Dame pertelote I say ȝou trewely
Macrobeus þat' writ' þe avisioun
In affryke of' þe worþy Cypriȯun
Affermeþ dremes and saiþ þat' þay ben
Warnyng' of' þinges þat' men after seen
And furþermore I pray ȝou lokeþ wel
þe olde testament of' Daniel
If' he heeld dreemes of' any vanyte
Reede eek' of' Ioseph and þer schuln ȝe see
Whether dremes ben som tyme I say not' alle
Warnyng' of' þinges þat' schuln after falle
Loke of' Egypt' þe king' Daun Pharao
His baker and his botiler also
Wher þey ne felten noon effecte in dremes
Who so wol seche þe acte of' sondry Remes
May rede of' dreemes many a wonder þing'
Lo Cresus which þat' was of' lyde king'

Mette he nouȝt þat he sat on a tree
Which signified he schulde anhanged be
Lo here adromacha Ectores wiff
That day þat Ector schulde lese his lyff
Sche dreemed on þe same night byforn
How þat þe lyff of Ector schulde be lorn
If þilke day he went in-to Batayle
Sche warned him but it mi3ht nouȝt auayle
He wente for to feighten neuer þe les
But he was slayn of oon achilles
But þilke tale is al to long to telle
And eek it is neigh day I may nouȝt dwelle
Schortly I say as for conclusiõn
þat I schal haue of þis auisiõn
Of aduersitees and I say forþermore [leaf 252]
That I nel telle of laxatifs no store
ffor þey ben venymous I wot right wel
I hem diffye I loué hem neuer a del
Now let vs speke of myrþe and stynte al þis
Madame pertelote so haue I blis
Of o þing god me haþ sent large grace
ffor when I se þe beaute of 3our face
3e ben so skarlet reed aboute 3oure eyen
It makeþ alle my drede for to deyen
ffor al so siker as In principio
Mulier est hominis confusio
Ma dame þe sentence of þis latyn is
Womman is mannes ioye and al his blys
ffor whan I feele a night 3oure softe syde
Al be it þat I may nought on 3ou ryde
ffor þat oure perche is maad so narwe allas
I am so fulle of ioye and solas
That I diffye boþe sweuen and dreem
And wiþ þat word he fleigh doun fro þe beem
ffor it was day and eek his hennes alle
And wiþ a chukke he gan hem for to calle

ffor he had founde a corn lay in þe ȝerde
Real he was nomore aferde
He feþerede p*er*telote twenty tyme
And tradde as ofte er it were p*ri*me
He lokeþ as it' were a grym lyo*u*n
And on his toos he romed vp and do*u*n
Him deygned nouȝt' to sette his feet' on grounde
Ay chukked he whan he hadde a corn y-founde
And to him þanne ranne his wyfes alle
Þus real as a prince in his halle
leue I þis Chaunteclere in his pasture
And after wol I telle of' his aduenture
When þe monþe in which þe world bigan
þat' highte march when god ferst' made man
Was complete and passed were also [leaf 252, back]
Seþins marche bygan þritty dayes and tuo
Bifelle þat' Chaunteclere in alle his pryde
his seuen wyues walkyng' him bysyde
Caste vp his eyen to þe brighte sonne
That' in þe signe of Taurus was y-ronne:
Twenty degrees . and oon and somwhat' more
He knew by kynde and by non oþer lore
That' it' was pryme and crew wiþ blisful steuene
The sonne he sayde is clumben vp on heuene
xl. degrees and oon and more y-wys
Madame p*er*telote my worldes blys
Herkne how þese blisful briddes synge
and see þe freisshe floures how þay springe
fful is my*n* herte of' Reuel and solace
But' sodeinly him fel a sorwful case
ffor euer þe latter ende of' Ioye is sone ago
And comunly often tyme it' falleþ so
And if' a Rethor couþe faire endite
He in a Croniq*ue* mighte saufly write
As for a souereyn notabilite /
Now euery wise man herkene to me

This story is also trewe I vndertake
As is þe book' of' launcelot' þe lake
þat' wo*m*men heelde in ful gret' reuerence
Now wol I torne aȝein to my sentence
A kolle fox ful of' sleiȝte and iniquite
That' in þe groue had woned ȝeeres þre
By heih ymaginacioñ aforn caste
þe same niȝt' þurghout' þe hegges braste
In-to þe yerde þer Chaunteclere þe faire
Was wont' and eek' his wyfes to repayre
And in a bedde of' worstes stille he lay
Til it' was passed vndern of' þe day
Wayting' his tyme on chaunteclere to falle
As gladly doon þese homicydes alle [leaf 253]
That' in awayte ligge to murþre men
O false murdrour roukyng' in þy den
O newe scariote and newe Genyloun
ffals dissimulour O greke Synoñ
That' broughtest' Troye outrely to sorwe
O Chaunteclere acorsed be þat' morwe
þat' þou in þe ȝerde fleyȝe fro þe beemes
Thou were ful wel y-warned by þin derems
That' þilke day was *per*ilous to þe
But' þat' at' god afore wot' moot' needes be
After þe opy̱nyoñ of certein clerkes
Witnesse on him þat' any clerk/ is
That' in scole gret' altercacioñ
In þis matiere and gret' disputesoñ
And haþ ben of' an hundred þousand men
But I ne can nouȝt' bulte it to þe bren
As can þe holy doctour augustyn
Or Boece or þe Bisschoppe Bradwardyn
Wheþer þat/ goddes wille afore wetyng'
Streyneþ me needely for to don a þing'
Needly clepe I simple necessite
Or elles if' þe free choys be *gra*unted me /

To do þat' same þing' or to do it nouȝt
þough god forwot' it' er it' was y-wrought'
Or of' his wetyng' streigneþ neuer a del
But' by necessite condicionel
I wol not' haue to doone of' such matiere
My tale is of' a cokk' as ȝe schuln after heere
That' took' his counseil of' his wyf' wiþ sorwe
To walke in-to þe ȝerd vppon þe morwe
That' he had mette þe dreem as I ȝou tolde
Wommens counseiles ben ful ofte colde
Wommans counseil brought' vs first' to wo
And made adam fro paradys to go
þer as he was ful mery and wel at' ese /
But' for I not' whom it' might' displese [leaf 253, back]
If' I councel of' wommen wolde blame
Passe ouer I seyde it' in my game
Rede auctours wher þey trete of' such matiere
And what' þay sein of' wommen ȝe may heere
These ben þe cokkes wordes and nought myne
I can non harme of' no womman devyne
ffayre in þe sande to baþe hire merily
liþ pertelote and alle hire sustres by
Aȝein þe sonne and Chaunteclere so fre
Sange meriere þan þe mere-mayde in þe see
ffor Physyalogus saiþ witterly
How þat' þey sungen wel and merily
And so bifelle as he cast' his ye
amonges þe wortes vpon a butterflye
He was war of' þis ffox þat' lay ful lowe
¶ No þing' ne luste him þanne for to crowe
But' cryed anon kok' kok' and vp he sterte
As man þat' was affrayed in his herte
ffor naturelly a beste desireþ to fle
ffro his contrarye if' he may it' se
þey he neuer hadde seye it erst' wiþ his ye
This Chaunteclere when he gan him espye

he wolde han fledde but' þat' þe fox anon
Sayde gentil sire allas what' wol ȝe doon
Been ȝe affrayed of' me þat' am ȝoure freende
Certes sire þen be ȝe vnheende
If' I to ȝou wolde harme or vilanye
I am nought' come ȝoure councel to aspie
But' trewely þe cause of' my comynge
Was oonly to herkne how þat' ȝe synge /
ffor trewely ȝe han as mery a steuene
As any aungel haþ þat' is in heuene
Ther-with ȝe han in Physike more felynge
þat' hadde boys or eny þat' can synge
My lord ȝoure fader god his soule blesse
And eek' ȝoure mooder of' hire gentilnesse [leaf 254]
han in myn hous I-ben ful wel at eese
and certes sire ful fayn wolde I ȝou pleese
But' for men speken of' syngyng' I wolde seye
So mote I brouke myne eyen tweye
Saue ȝou I ne herde neuer man so synge
As dide ȝoure fader in þe morwenynge
Certes it was of' herte al þat' he sange
And for to make his voys þe more strange
He wolde so peyne him þat' wiþ boþe his eyen
He moste wynke so lowde he dide cryen
And standen on his typtoos þer-wiþ-al
And strecche forþ his nekke long' and smal
And eek' he was of' such discrecioñ
That' þer was no man in no regioñ
That him in song' or wisdam mighte passe
I haue wel rad daun burnelle the asse
Among his vers þer was a kok'
ffor a prestes sone ȝaf' him a knok'
Vpon his legges whil he was yong' and nyce
He made him for to leese his benefice
But' certein þer is no comparisoñ
Betwixe þe wisdam and discrecioñ

Of' 3oure fader and of' his subtilte
Now syngeþ sire for seinte Charite
Let' see conne 3e 3oure fader countrefete
Þis Chaunteclere his wynges gan to bete
As man þat' couþe his tresoñ not' aspye
So was he rauysscht' wiþ his flaterye ¶ *Nota bene*
¶ Allas 3e lordes many a fals flatour
Is in 3oure Court' and many a losengour
Þat' pleasen 3ou more by my feiþ
Then he þat' soþfastnesse vnto 3ou seiþ
Redeþ ecclesiastre of' flaterie
Beþ war 3e lordes of' here treccherie
This Chaunteclere stood heye vpon his toos
Strecching' his necke and huld his eyen clos [leaf 254, back]
And gan to crowe lowde for þe nones
And daun Russel stert' vp al at' oones
And by þe gargage hente Chaunteclere
And on his bak' toward the woode him bere
ffor 3et' was þere noman þat' him sewed
O destyne þat' mayst not' ben eschewed
Allas þat' Chaunteclere fel fro þe bemes
Allas his wyf' ne roughte nought' of' dremes
And on a friday fell*e* al þis meschaunce
O venus þat' art' goddesse of' plesa*un*ce
Seþines þat þi se*r*uañt was þis Chaunteclere
And in þin se*r*uise dede al his powere /
More for delite þan þe world to multiplie
Why woldestow suffre him / on þin day to dye
O Gaufrede deere maister sou*er*ayn
That' whan þy worþy king' Richard was slayn
Wiþ schotte compleynedest' his deþ so sore
Why ne hadde I now þin sentence and þin lore
The friday for to chyde as deden 3e /
ffor on a ffriday schortly slayn was he
Þenne wolde I schewe 3ou how þat' I couþe pleyne
ffor Chaunteclere and for his peyne

Certes such cry ne lamentacioñ
Was of' ladyes maade whan yleoñ
Was wonne and Purris wiþ his streighte swerd
Whenne he hente king' Pryam by þe berd
And slayn him as seyde Enneydos
As maden alle þe hennes in þe cloos
Whan þey hadde seye of' chaunteclere þe sigħt'
But' soueraynly dame Pertelote schrigħt'
fful lowder þen dede hasdrubaldes wyff'
Whan þat' hire housbonde hadde lost' his lyff'
And þat' þe Romayns had berud Cartage
Sche was so fulle of torment and of' Rage
þat' wilfully in to þe fuyr sche sterte
And brend hir selue wiþ a stedefast' herte [leaf 255]
O wofulle hennes rigħt' so cryede ȝe
As whan þat' Nero brende þe Cite
Of' Rome cryden þe Senatours wyfes
ffor þat' here housbondes schulde leese here lyues
Wiþouten gilte Nero haþ hem slayn
¶ Now wole I turne vnto my tale agayn
This seely widewe and hire doughtres tuo
Herden þe hennes crien and make woo /
And out' at' þe dore sterten þay anon
And sawe þe fox toward þe groue goon
And bar vpon his bak' þe kok' away
And cryden out harrow and weloway
A ha þe fox and after him þay ran
And eek' with staues many anoþer man
Ran colle oure dogge Talbot' and Garlond
And Malkyn wiþ hire distaf' in hire hond
Ran cow and calf' and eek' þe verrey hogges
Sore aferde for berkyng' of' þe dogges
And schowtyng' of' men and of' wommen eeke
þey ronne so her hert' þey þoughtt tobreeke
They yelleden as feendes don in helle
The dokes cryden as men wolde hem quelle

Out' of' þe huyues come þe swarm of' bees
þe gees for feere flowen ouer þe trees
So hidous was þe noyse a benedicite
Certes he Iakke strawe and his meynee
Ne maden neuere schoutes half' so schrille
Whan þat' þay wolden eny flemyng' kille
As þat' ilke day was maad vpon þe ffox
Of' bras þey broughte beemes and of' Box
Of' horne and boon in whiche þey pouped
And þer-wiþal þey schriched and þey schouted
It' semed as þat' heuen schulde falle
Now goode men I pray 3ou herkneþ alle
Lo how fortune turneþ sodeinly
The hope and eek' þe pruyde of' here enuye [leaf 255, back]
This Cok' þat' lay vpon þis foxes bak'
In alle his drede vnto þe fox he spak'
And sayde sire if' I were as 3e
3et' schuld I say as wis god helpe me
Turneþ a3ein 3e proude cherles alle
A verray pestilence vpon 3ou falle
Now am I come vnto þis woodes syde
Maugre 3our heed þe cok' schal here abyde
I wole him ete in feiþ and þat' anon
The ffox answerde in feiþ it' schal be don
and [as] he spak' þat' word al sodeinly
This Cok' brak' fro his mouþ delyuerly
An heigh vpon a tree he fleigh anoon
And whan þe fox saugh þat' he was goon
Allas quod he O Chaunteclere allas
I haue quod he don to 3ow a trespas
In als moche as I made 3ou afferd
When I 3ou hente and brought out' of' þe 3erd
But' sire I dede it nought in no wicked entent'
Come doun and I schal telle 3ou what I ment
I schal 3ou seye soþ god helpe me so /
Nay þanne quod he I schrewe vs boþe tuo /

And ferst I schrewe my self boþe blood and bones
If þou begile me ofter þan ones /
Thou schalt nomore wiþ þin flaterye
Do me to synge and wynke wiþ myn ye
ffor he þat wynkeþ whan he schulde se
As wisly god let him neuer þe
Nay quod þe fox god ȝiue him meschaunce
That is so vndiscret of gouernaunce
þat iangleþ whan he schulde haue pees
Lo suche it is for to be recheles /
and necligent and trusteþ on flaterye
But ȝe þat halden þis tale a folye
As of a fox and of a cok and an hen
Takeþ þe moralite goode men [leaf 256]
ffor seint poule saiþ / alle þat writen is
To oure doctrine / it is y-writen y-wis
Takeþ þe fruit/ and leteþ þe chaff be stille
Now goode god if þat it be þin wille /
As seiþ my lord so make vs alle goode men
And bringe vs alle to his heihe blisse ameN

Here endeþ þe Nonne prestes tale

GROUP H. FRAGMENT IX.

§ 1. THE MANCIPLE'S HEAD-LINK.

CORPUS MS.

[*on leaf* 256] Here folweþ þe P*ro*loge of^{t} þe mañ-
¶ ciples tale Ca^{m} xxiij^{mo}

WOt^{t} ȝe not^{t} wher þer stant/ a litel toun
Which þat^{t} is cleped Bobbe vp and do*u*n
vnder þe Blee in Caunt*er*bery way
Ther gan oure Oste for to Iape and play
And sayde syres what^{t} donne is in þe myre
Is no man for preyer ne for huyre
That^{t} wole awake oure felawe be-hynde /
A þeef^{t} migħt^{t} him ful lightly robbe and bynde
Se how he nappeþ se for goddes bones
þat^{t} he wol falle fro his hors at^{t} ones
Is þat^{t} a Cook^{t} of^{t} londoñ wiþ meschañce
Do him come forth he knoweþ his penãnce
ffor he schal telle a tale by my fey
Al þough it be nought^{t} worþ a botel hey
Awake þou Cook^{t} q*uod* he god ȝiue þe sorwe
What eyleþ þe to slepe by þe morwe
hast^{t} þou had fleen al night^{t} or art^{t} þou drunke
Or hast^{t} þou wiþ som quene al night^{t} y-swunke
So þat^{t} þou myst^{t} nought^{t} holden vp þin heed
This Cook^{t} þat^{t} was ful pale and no þing^{t} reed
Seyde oure Ost^{t} so god my soule blesse
As þer is falle on me such heuynesse
Not^{t} I nouȝt^{t} why me were leuer to slepe
Then þe beste galoñ of^{t} wyn in Chepe

Wel q*uod* þe maunciple if' it' þe may don ese
To þe *sir* Cook' and to no wight' displese
Which þat' heer rydeþ in þis companye /
And þat' oure host' wole of' his curtesye
I wole as now excuse þe of' þin tale [leaf 256, back]
ffor in good feiþ þi visage is ful pale
Thin eyen dasewen soþly as me þinkeþ
And wel I woot' þi breþ ful soure stinkeþ
That' scheweþ wel þou art' nought' wel disposed
Of' me certeyn þou schalt' nought' ben y-glosed
Se how he goneth lo his drunken wight'
As þough he wolde vs swolwe anon right'
hald clos þin mouþ man by þyn fader kyn
The deuyl of' helle sette his foot' þerin
This cursed breth wol infecte vs alle
ffy stynkynge swyn fy foule mote þe falle
Takeþ heede sires of' þis lusty man
Now sweete sire wole ȝe iuste at' þe van
Ther-to me þenkeþ ȝe ben wel y-schape
I trowe þat' ȝe haue drunken wyn ape
And þat' is whan men pleye wiþ a straw /
And wiþ his speche þe Cooke wax al wraw
And on þe maunciple bygan he nodde faste
ffor lakke of' speche and doun þe hors him caste
Wher as he lay til þat' men him vp took'
This was a fayr Chiuacheef' of' a cook'
Allas he ne hadde holde him by his ladel
And er þat' he aȝein were in his sadel
Ther was a gret' schowuyng' boþe to and fro
To lifte him vp and mochil care and woo
So vnweldy was þis sely pallede goste
And to þe maunciple þenne spak' oure Oste
By cause þat' drynke haþ dominacioñ
Vpon þis man by my Sauacioñ
I trowe he lewedly wolde telle his tale
ffor were it' wyn or olde or moysty ale

That' he haþ drunke he speke þ so in his nose /
And fnese þ faste and eek' he haþ þe pose
he hath also to don more þan ynough
To kepe him and his capel out' of' þe slough
And if' he falle fro his capil eft' sone /
Thenne schulle we alle haue ynough to doone
In liftyng' vp his heuy drunken cors
Telle on þin tale of' him make I no fors
But' ȝit' maunciple in feiþ þou art' to nyce
Thus openly to reproue him of' his vice
Anoþer day he wole perauenture
Reclayme þe and bringen þe to lure
I mene he speke wole of' smale þinges
And for to pynchen at' þine rekenynges
That' were not' honeste if' it' come to pref'
No quod þe maunciple þat' were a gret' meschief'
So might' he bringe me in to þe snare
Yet' hadde I leuer payen for þe mare
Which he ryt' on þan he schulde wiþ me stryue
I wol not' wraþþe him so mote I þryue
þat' þat' I spak' I seyde it' in my bourde
And wite ȝe wel I haue heer in my gourde
A draught' of' wyn ye of' a rype grape
And right' anon ȝe schullen seen a good Iape
This Cook' schal drynke þer-of' if' I may
vp peyne of' my lyf' he wol not' say nay
And certeinly to tellen as it/ was
Of' þis vesseH þe Cook' drank' faste allas
What' needeþ it' he drank' ynough aforn
And whan he hadde pouped in his horn
To þe maunciple he took' þe gourde again
And of' þat' drynke þe cook' was wonder fayn
And þanked him in such wise as he cowde
Then gan oure Oste to lawhe wonder lowde
And sayde I se wel it' is necessarie
Where þat' we goon good drink' wiþ vs to carie

ffor þat wol tourne rancour and disese 97
To acord and loue and many a word to peese
O Bachus y-blessed be þy name
þat so canst torne ernest in to game 100
Worschipe and þonke be to þy deite [leaf 257, back]
Of þat matiere ne gete ȝe nomore of me
Tel on þi tale þou mañciple I þe preye
Wel sire *quod* he now kerkneþ what I seye ¶ Explicit
prologus

[*on leaf* 257, *back*]

Incipit fabula

Whan phebus dwelde heer in þis erþe adoun
As olde booke maken mencioun
he was þe moste lusty bachiler
Of/ alle þe world and eekꝰ þe bestꝰ archeer
he sloughh Phytoñ þe serpent/ as he lay
Slepyngꝰ agayn þe sonne vpon a day
And many anoþer noble worþy dede /
He wiþ his bowe broughht as men nowe rede
Pleyen he couþe ofꝰ euery menstralcye
And syngen þatꝰ it was a melodye
To heeren ofꝰ his cleere voys þe soun
Certes þe kingꝰ ofꝰ Thebes amphyoun
Thatꝰ wiþ his syngyngꝰ walled þatꝰ Cite
Cowde neuer syngen halfꝰ so wel as he
Therto he was þe semlyeste man
þatꝰ is or was siþen þe world bygan
Whatꝰ needeþ itꝰ his fetures to discryue
ffor in þis world was non so fair on lyue
he was þer-wiþ fulfild ofꝰ gentilnesse
Ofꝰ honour and of parfyte worþinesse
This Phebus þatꝰ was flour ofꝰ Bachelrye
As wel in freedam as in Chiualrie
ffor disporte in signe eekꝰ ofꝰ victorie
Ofꝰ Phytoñ so as telleþ vs þe storye
Was worþy to beren in his hond a bowe /
Now hadde þis Phebus in his hous a crowe
Which in a cage he fostred many a day
And taughtꝰ itꝰ speke as þatꝰ men teche a Iay

Whit' was þis Crowe as is a snow whit' swan
And countrefeted þe speche of' euery man
he cowde when he schulde telle a tale
Ther-wiþ in al þe world no nightyngale
Ne couþe by an hundred þousend deel [leaf 258]
Syngen so wonderly meryly and weel
Now hadde þis Phebus in his hous a wyf'
Which þat' he loued more þan his owne lyf'
And nigħt' and day dyd euer his diligence
Hir for to plese and don hire reuerence
Saue oonly if' þe soþ þat' I schal sayn
Gelous he was and wolde haue kept' hire fayn
ffor him were loþ by-Iaped for to be
And so euery wigħt' in such degre
But' al for nouȝt' for it' auayleþ nouȝt'
A good wyff' þat is clene of' werk' and þougħt
Schulde nought' be kepte in non awayte certain
And trewely þe labour is in vayn
To kepe a schrewe for it wol nouȝt' be
This halde I for a verray nycete
To spille labour for to keepe wyues
Thus writen olde Clerkes in here lyues
But' now to purpos as I first' bigan
This worþy Phebus doþ al þat' he can
To plesen hyre wenyng' by such plesañce
And for his manhode and his gouernañce
That' no man schulde haue put him fro hir grace
But' god it' woot/ þer may no man enbrace
As to distreyne a þing' which þat nature
Haþ naturelly sette in a creature
Take eny bryd and put it' in a kage
And do al þin entent and þy corage
To fostre it tendrely wiþ mete and drinke
Of' alle deyntees þat' þou canst' byþinke
And keepe it/ also clenly as þou may
Al þough his cage of' golde be neuer so gay

3et' haþ þis bridde by .xx. þousand folde
Leuer in a fforest' þat' is wilde and colde
Gon ete wormes and such wrecchedenesse
ffor euer þis bridde wol doon his busynesse
To eskape out' of' his cage when' he may [leaf 258, back]
his liberte þe bridde desireþ ay
Let' take a catte and fostre him wel wiþ melk'
An tendre fleissch̄ and make his couche of' selk'
And let' him seen a mous go by þe walle
And anon he weyueþ milke fleissche and alle
And euery deynte þat' is in þat' hous
Such appetyt' haþ sche to ete a mous
Lo he[re] haþ luste his dampnacioñ
And appetyt' flemyth discrecioñ
As þe wolf' haþ also a vyleyns kynde
The lewedeste wolf' þat' sche may fynde
Of' lest' of' reputacioñ þat' wol sche take
In tyme whan hire luste to haue a make
Alle þise ensamples speke I by þese men
That' ben vntrewe and noþing' by wommen
ffor men han euere a likerous appetyt'
On lowere þing' to parforme here delyt'
Then on here wyfes ben þay neuer so fayre
Ne neuer so trewe ne so debonaire
ffleissche is so newefongul wiþ meschañce
That' we ne konne in no þing' han plesañce
That' sowneþ in to vertu eny while
This Phebus which þat' þoughte' vpon no gile
Desceyued was for alle his Iolite
ffor vnder him anoþer hadde sche
A man of' litel reputacioñ
Nought' worþ to Phebus in comparisoñ
The more harm it' is it' happeþ ofte so
Of' which þer comeþ mochil harme and wo
And so bifelle whan Phebus was absent'
His wif' anon haþ for hir lemman sent'

Hire le*m*man certes þis is a kauissch speche
fforʒiueþ it me and þat I ʒou beseche
The wyse Plato saiþ as ʒe may rede
þe worde moot need acorde wiþ þe dede
ʒif men schal telle p*ro*prely a þing [leaf 259]
The word moot/ cosyn be to þe workyng
I am a boystous man rihtt þus say I
Ther is no difference trewely
Betwix a wyf þat is of heih degre
If of hire body dishoneste sche be
And a pouere wenche othir þan þis
If it so be þey werke boþe amys
But þat þe gentil is in staat aboue
Sche schal be cleped his lady as in loue
And for þat oþer is a pouer wo*m*man
Sche schal be cleped his wenche or his lem̄man
And god it woot my*n* owne deere bro*þer*
Men leyn þat oon as lowe as liþ þat oþ*er*
Right so betwixe a titles tyraunt
And an outlawe or a þeef erraunt
The same I say þer is no difference /
To alisaundre was tolde þis sentence /
That for þe tyraunt is of grettere might
By force of meyne for to sleen do*u*n right
And brenne hous and home and make al playn
Lo þ*er*fore is he cleped a Capitayn
¶ And for þe outlawe haþ but smal meigne
And may not doon so gret an harm as he
Ne bringe a Contre to so gret mescheef
Men clepen him an outlawe or a þeef
But for I am a man not texted wel
I wol not telle of Tytus neuer a deel
I wol go to my tale as I began
Whan Phebus [wyf] hadde sent for hire le*m*man
Anon þey wroughten alle here lust volage
This white crowe þat heng ay in þe kage

Bihelde hire werk' and seyde neuer a word
And whan þat home was come Phebus þe lord
This crowe sange cokkow cokkow cokkow
What' bryd q*uo*þ Phebus what' song' syngest' þou
Ne were þou wont' so meryly to synge [leaf 259, back]
þat' to my*n* herte it' was a reioisschinge
To here þi voys allas what' song' is þis
By god q*uod* he I synge nought amys
Phebus q*uod* he for al þi worþinesse
ffor alle þy beaute and þyn gentilnesse
ffor alle þi song' and al þi menstralcye
ffor al þi waytyng' blered is þin ye
Wiþ on of' litel reputacioñ
Nought' worþ to þe as in comparisoñ
þe mountañce of' a gnatte so mote I þriue
ffor on þy bed þy wyff / I say him swyue
What' wole ȝe more þe crowe anon him tolde
By sadde tokenes and by wordes bolde
How þat' his wyf' hadde doon hire leccherie
him to gret' schame and to gret' vilanye
And tolde him ofte he say it' wiþ his eyen
þis Phebus gan awayward for to wryen
him þought' his sorwful herte brast a tuo /
His bowe he bente and sette þer-Inne a floo
And in his Ire þan haþ he his wif' y-slayn
This is þeffecte þer is nomore to sayn
ffor sorwe of' which he brak' his mynstralcye
Boþe harpe and lewte gyterne and Sawterye
And eek' he brak' his arwes and his bowe
And after þat' þus spak' he to þe crowe
Traytour q*uod* he wiþ tonge of' Scorpioñ
Thou hast' me brought to my confusioñ
Allas þat' I was wrought' why nere I ded
O deere wyf' o gemme of' lustyhed
That' were to me so sadde and eek' so trewe
Now lyes þou deed wiþ face pale of' hewe /

ffful gulteles þat' durst' I swere ywys
O rakel hound to don so foule amys
O trouble witte .O. Ire recheles
That' vnauysed smytest' gulteles /
O wan-truste ful of' fals suspecioñ [leaf 260]
Where was þy witte and þi discrecioñ
O eu*e*ry man be war of' rekelnesse
Ne trowe noþing' wiþouten strong' witnesse
Smyt' nouȝt' to sone er þat' þou wite why
And be auysed wel and soburly
Or ȝe doon eny execucioñ
Vpon ȝoure Ire for suspecioñ
Allas a þousand folk' han rakel Ire
ffully fordoon or brought' hem in þe myre
Allas for sorwe I wil my selue slee
And to þe crowe O false þeef' sayde he
I wol þe quyte anon þy false tale
þou songe whilom lyk' a nightyngale
Now schalt' þou false þeef' þi song' forgon
Eeke þin white feþeres euerichon
Ne neuer in all*e* þi lyue schalt' þou speke
Thus schal men on a traitour ben awreke
Thou and þin hospreinge euere schuln be blake
Ne neuere swete noyse schul ȝe make /
But' euer crye agayn tempest' and reyn
In toknyng' þat' þurgh þe my wyf' was slayn
And to þe crowe he sterte and þat' anon
And pulled his white feþeres eu*e*rychon
and made him blak' and reft' him all*e* his song'
And eek' his speche and out' at' þe dore him slong'
vnto þe deuel which I him betake /
And for þis caas ben all*e* crowes blake
Lordynges by þis ensample I ȝou preye
Beþ war and takeþ keepe what' þat' ȝe seye
Ne telleþ neuer no man) in ȝour lyff/
how þat' anoþ*er* man haþ dight' his wyf'

He wole ȝow haten mortelly certein
Daun Salomon as wise clerkes sein
Techeþ a man to kepe his tonge wel
But' as I sayde I am nought text' wel
But naþeles þus taughte me my dame [leaf 260, back]
My sone þenk' on þe crowe a goddes name
My sone keepe wel þi tonge and kepe þy frende
A wikked tonge is worse þan a feende
My sone ffrom a feend men may hem blesse
My sone god of' his endeles goodnesse /
Walled a tonge wiþ teeþ and lippes eeke
ffor man schulde him auyse what' he speeke
My sone ful ofte for to mochel speche
haþ many a man be spilt' as clerkes teche
But' for litel speche auysily
Is no man schent' to speke gen*er*ally
My sone þy tonge schuldest' þou restreigne
At' alle tyme but' whan þou dost' þy peyne
To speke of' god in honour and preyere
The ferste vertu sone if' þou wolt' lere
Is to restreyne and kepe wel þi tunge
þus lernen children whanne þey ben ȝonge
My sone of mochel spekyng' euel auysed
Ther lasse spekyng' hadde ynough suffised
Comeþ mochil harm þus was me told and taught
In mochil speche synne wanteþ naught
Wostow wher-of' a rakil tonge serueþ
Right' as a swerd forkutteþ and forkerueþ
An arm a tuo my deere sone right so
A tunge kutteþ frendschipe al a tuo
A ianglere is to god abhominable /
Rede Salamon so wys and honorable /
Rede Dauyd and his psalmys red senekke
My sone speek' nought' but' wiþ þin heed þou bekke
Dissimule as þou were defe if' þat' þou heere
A Iangler speke of' p*er*ilous mateere /

þe flemyngꝫ saiþ and lerne it ifꝫ þe leste
þat lytel Iangelynge causeþ mechel reste
My sone ifꝫ þou no wickede word hastꝫ seyd
þe þar nouȝtꝫ drede for to be bywreyd
Butꝫ he þatꝫ haþ myssayd I dar wel sayn [leaf 261]
he may by no way clepe his word agayn
Thingꝫ þatꝫ is sayde is sayde and forþ itꝫ goþ
Though him repente or be him neuer so loþ
he is his þralle to whom þatꝫ he haþ sayd
A tale ofꝫ which he is now yuele payd
My sone be war and be nouȝt auctour newe
Of tydynges whetherꝫ þay ben fals or trewe
Wher so þou come amonges heihe or lowe
Kepe wel þy tunge and þenkꝫ vpon þe crowe Explicitꝫ
fabula mancipii

GROUP I. FRAGMENT X.

§ 1. THE BLANK-PARSON LINK.

[This is really a link between some unwritten Tale and the Parson's. It has been made into the Manciple-Parson Link (or Yeoman-Parson by the Christ-Church MS) by Chaucer's copiers, though not meant for it.]

CORPUS MS.

Here bygynneþ þe prologe of' þe p*ar*soñ [*on leaf* 261]

By þat' þe maunciple hadde his tale ended Ca^m^ xxiiij^m^
The sonne fro þe souþ syde is descended
So lowe þat' he was nought' to my sight
Degrees xxix as of' highte /
Ten of' þe clokke it' was so as I gesse /
ffor xj foote a lytel more or lesse
My schadwe was at' þilke tyme as þere /
Of' suche feet' as my lengþe parted were /
In six foote equal of' p*ro*porcioñ
Ther-wiþ þe mones exaltacioñ
I mene libra alwey gan ascende
As we were entryng' at' a thropes ende
ffor wiþ oure Oste as he was wont' to gye
As in þis caas oure ioly companye /
Sayde in þis wise lordynges eu*er*ychon
Now lakkeþ vs no tale more þan oon
ffulfild is my sentence and my degre
Who wile now telle a tale let' se
Almost' fulfilled is my*n* ordynaunce
I p*ray* to god so ȝiue him right' good chañce
þat' telleþ þis tale to vs lustely
Sire prest' q*uod* he art' þou a vicary
Or art' þou a p*er*soñ say soþ by þy fey
Be what' þou be ne breke nought' oure pley

ffor euery man saue þou haþ told his tale
vnbokele and schewe vs what' is in þy male [leaf 261, back]
ffor trewely me þenkeþ by þy cheere
Thou scholdest' knette vp wel a gret' matiere
Telle vs a fable anon for cokkes bones
This *per*soñ answered al at' oones
Thou getest' fable non y-tolde for me
ffor Poule þat' writeþ vnto Thimothe
Repreueþ hem þat' wayuen soþfastnesse
And tellen fables and such wrecchednesse
Whi schulde I schewen draff' out' of' my feste /
Whan I may schewen whete if' þat' me leste
ffor which I saye if' þat' þou luste to heere
Moralite and *ver*tuous matiere
And þenne þat' ȝe woln ȝiue me audience
I wol ful fayn at' cristes reuerence /
Don ȝou plesaunce lefful as I can
But' trusteþ wel I am a sothryn man
I can nought geste rom ram ruf' by lettre
Ne god wot' rym holde I but' lytel bettre
And þer*f*ore if' ȝou luste I wol nought' glose
I wol ȝou telle a mery tale in prose
To knitte vp al þis feste an ende
And ihesu for his grace witte me sende
To schewe ȝou þe wey in þis visage
Of' þilke p*ar*fyt' glorious pilgrimage
That' highte Ier*usal*em Celestial
And if' ȝe vouche sauf' anon ȝe schal
Bygynne vpon my tale for which I preye
Telle ȝoure avis I can no bettre seye
But' naþeles þis meditacioñ
I putte it ay vnder correctioñ
Of' clerkes for I am nought text' wel
I take but' þe sentence trustel wel
þerfore I make protestacioñ
That' I wol stonde to correctioñ

Vppon þis word we han assented sone [*a leaf cut out of the Corpus MS*]
[for as hit semed / hit was for to doone [**MS Arch. Seld. B. 14,** *leaf 268*]
to enden / in som v*er*tuous sentence
and for to yeve him space / *and* audience 64
and bad oure Oste / he shulde to him say
that alle we / to telle his tale him pray
oure Oste had the wordes / for vs alle
sir prest q*uo*d he / now faire yow befalle 68
sey what yow luste / *and* we wol gladly here
and with̄ that worde / he seide in this manere
telleth̄ q*uo*d he / youre meditaciouñ
but hasteth yow / the sonne wol a-douñ 72
beth̄ fructuous / *and* that in litel space
and to do wel / god sende yow his grace.
Here endith the p*ar*son his prolog] [**MS Arch. Seld. B. 14** *extract stops*]

XXIII. Odd Texts of Chaucer's Minor Poems, Part I, containing 1. two MS fragments of 'The Parliament of Fowles;' 2. the two differing versions of 'The Prologue to the Legende of Good Women,' arranged so as to show their differences; 3. an Appendix of Pieces attributed to Chaucer, i. 'The Balade of Pitee by Chaucere;' ii. 'The Cronycle made by Chaucer,' both from MSS written by Shirley, Chaucer's contemporary.

XXIV. A One-Text Print of Chaucer's Minor Poems, being the best Text from the Parallel-Text Edition, Part I, containing, I. The Dethe of Blaunche the Duchesse, II. The Compleynt to Pite, III. The Parlement of Foules, IV. The Compleynt of Mars, V. The A B C, with its original from De Deguileville's *Pèlerinage de la Vie humaine* (edited from the best Paris MSS by M. Paul Meyer).

The issue for **1872**, in the **First Series**, is,

XXV. Chaucer's Tale of Melibe, the Monk's, Nun's Priest's, Doctor's, Pardoner's, Wife of Bath's, Friar's, and Summoner's Tales, in 6 parallel Texts from the MSS above named, with the remaining 13 coloured drawings of Tellers of Tales, after the originals in the Ellesmere MS, and with Specimens of the Variations of 30 MSS in the Doctor-Pardoner Link. (6-Text, Pt IV.)

XXVI. The Wife's, Friar's, and Summoner's Tales, from the Ellesmere MS, with 9 woodcuts of Tale-Tellers. (Part IV.)

XXVII. The Wife's, Friar's, Summoner's, Monk's, and Nun's Priest's Tales, from the Hengwrt MS, with 23 woodcuts of the Tellers of the Tales. (Part III.)

XXVIII. The Wife's, Friar's, and Summoner's Tales, from the Cambridge MS, with 9 woodcuts of Tale-Tellers. (Part IV.)

XXIX. A Treatise on the Astrolabe, addressed to his son Lowys, in 1391 A.D., by Geoffrey Chaucer, edited by the Rev. Walter W. Skeat, M.A.

The issue for **1873**, in the **First Series**, is,

XXX. The Six-Text Canterbury Tales, Part V, containing the Clerk's and Merchant's Tales.

The issue for **1874**, in the **First Series** (ready in June 1873), is,

XXXI. The Six-Text, Part VI, containing the Squire's and Franklin's Tales.

XXXII to XXXVI. Large Parts of the separate issues of five MSS.

The issue for **1875**, in the **First Series** (ready in September 1875), is,

XXXVII. The Six-Text, Part VII, the Second Nun's, Canon's-Yeoman's, and Manciple's Tales, with the Blank-Parson Link.

XXXVIII to XLIII. Large Parts of the separate issues of the Six MSS, bringing all up to the Parson's Tale.

XLIV. A detailed Comparison of the *Troylus and Cryseyde* with Boccaccio's *Filostrato*, with a Translation of all Passages used by Chaucer, and an Abstract of the Parts not used, by W. Michael Rossetti, Esq., and with a print of the *Troylus* from the Harleian MS 2893. Part I.

XLV. An alphabetical list of Chaucer's rymes in the Canterbury Tales, as shown by the Ellesmere MS. (*This will not be ready till* 1874.)

Of the **Second Series**, the issue for **1868** is,

1. Early English Pronunciation, with especial reference to Shakspere and Chaucer, by Alexander J. Ellis, Esq., F.R.S. Part I. This work includes an amelioration of Prof. F. J. Child's two excellent and exhaustive Papers on the use of the final *-e* by Chaucer (in T. Wright's ed. of *The Canterbury Tales*) and by Gower (in Dr Pauli's ed. of the *Confessio Amantis*).

2. Essays on Chaucer, his Words and Works, Part I.: 1. Prof. Ebert's Review of Sandras's *Etude sur Chaucer*, translated by J. W. van Hees Hoets, M.A.; 2. A 15th-century Latin Treatise on the *Chilindre* (of the *Miller's Tale*), edited by Mr E. Brock.

3. A Temporary Preface to the Society's Six-Text edition of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, Part I, attempting to show the right Order of the Tales, and the Days and Stages of the Pilgrimage, &c. &c., by F. J. Furnivall, Esq., M.A.

Of the **Second Series**, the issue for **1869** is,

4. Early English Pronunciation, with especial reference to Shakspere and Chaucer, by Alexander J. Ellis, Esq., F.R.S. Part II.

Of the **Second Series**, the issue for **1870** is,

5. Early English Pronunciation, with especial reference to Shakspere and Chaucer, by Alexander J. Ellis, Esq., F.R.S. Part III.

Of the **Second Series**, the issue for **1871** is,

6. Trial-Forewords to my Parallel-Text edition of Chaucer's *Minor Poems* for the Chaucer Society (with a try to set Chaucer's Works in their right order of Time), by Frnlk. J. Furnivall. Part I. (This Part brings out, for the first time, Chaucer's long early but hopeless love.)

Of the **Second Series**, the issue for **1872** is,

7. Originals and Analogues of some of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, Part I. 1 The original of the *Man of Law's Tale* of Constance, from the French Chronicle Nicholas Trivet, Arundel MS 56, ab. 1340 A.D., collated with the later copy in the National Library at Stockholm; copied and edited, with a translation, by Dr Edmund Brock. 2. The Tale of "Merelaus the Emperor," from the Late English version of the *Gesta Romanorum* in Harl. MS 7333; and 3. Part of Matthew Paris's *Vita duo Offæ Primi*, both stories illustrating incidents in the *Man of Law's Tale*. 4 Two French Fabliaux like the *Reeve's Tale*. 5. Two Latin Stories like the *Friar's Tale*.

Of the **Second Series**, the issue for **1873** is,

8. Albertano of Brescia's *Liber Consolationis et Consilii*, A.D. 1246 the Latin source of the French original of Chaucer's *Melibeus*, edited from the MS. by Dr Thos Sundby.

Of the **Second Series**, the issue for **1874** is,

9. Essays on Chaucer, his Words and Works, Part II.: 1. *John of Hoveden's Penitencia Chilonidis*, edited from the MS. with a translation, by Mr E. Brock. 2. Chaucer's use of the final *-e*, by Joseph Payne, Esq. 3. Mrs E. Barrett-Browning on Chaucer; being those parts of her review of the *Book of the Poets*, 1842, which relate to him; here reprinted by leave of Mr Robert Browning. 4. Professor Bernhard Ten-Brink's critical edition of Chaucer's *Troylus* re *Felie*.

Of the **Second Series**, the issue for **1875** is,

10. Originals and Analogues of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, Part II. 6. Albertano of Lintricho, a Story like the *Prioress's Tale*. 7. How Bernard caught Chaucer, the source of the *Nun's-Priest's Tale*. 8. Two Italian Stories, and a Latin story, like the *Pardoner's Tale*. 9. The Tale of the Priest's Bladder, a story like the *Summoner's Tale*, being 'Li dis de le Vescie a Prestre,' par Jakes de Basiw. 10. Petrarch's Latin Tale of Griseldis (with Boccaccio's Story from which it was retold), the original of the *Clerk's Tale*. 11. Five Versions of a Pear-tree Story, like that in the *Merchant's Tale*. 12. Four Versions of The Life of Saint Cecilia, the original of the *Second Nun's Tale*.

Among the Texts and Essays preparing are:—

Supplementary Canterbury Tales: 1. The Tale of *Beryn*, with a Prologue of the merry Adventure of the Pardoner with a Tapster at Canterbury, re-edited from the Duke of Northumberland's unique MS. by Fredk. J. Furnivall. (The text is all printed.) [*In the Press.*

Prof. Bernhard Ten-Brink's "CHAUCER: Studien zur Historie seiner Entwickelung und zur Chronologie seiner Schriften," Part I, translated by Miss Cella Bland, and revised by the Author.

The Household Book of Isabella, wife of Prince Lionel, third son of Edward III, in which the name of GEOFFREY CHAUCER first occurs; edited from the unique MS in the British Museum, by Edward A. Bond, Esq., Keeper of the MSS.

Essays on Chaucer, Part III., by F. J. Furnivall, Esq., Dr Alfred Kingsley, &c.

Originals and Analogues of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, Part III.

For 1876, Part VIII of the Six-Text edition, containing the Parson's Tale, and completing the *Canterbury Tales*, is copied for the First Series; and for the Fifth of Chaucer's Minor Poems. For the Second Series, 'A detailed Comparison of Chaucer's *Knight's Tale* with the *Teseide* of Boccaccio,' by Henry Ward, Esq., of the MS Department of the British Museum, is preparing.

The fourth and concluding Part of Mr A. J. Ellis's great work on *Early English Pronunciation* may be expected in 1874.

The third French work will be either Guillaume de Machault's *Jugement de Roy de Behaigne* and *Dit de la Fontaine Amoureuse* (to compare with Chaucer's *Book of the Duchess*), or Jean de Meun's *Livre de Melibée et de Dame Prudence* (from Albertano of Brescia's *Liber Consolationis*, A.D. 1246), or Guillaume de Machault's *Dit de la Marguerite* (the possible original of Chaucer's lost *Book of the Lion*, edited from the MSS. for the first time, by Monsieur Paul Meyer). This will be followed by such of Chaucer's other works as are known, but are not at once to be taken here.

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BSB Bayerische StaatsBibliothek
MDZ Münchener DigitalisierungsZentrum Digitale Bibliothek

Chaucer, Geoffrey,

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